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A DOWNRIGHT rejection of the papal terms would be in every sense a dangerous misfortune. What we have essentially to consider is how they can strengthen our own morale and at the same time promote our final object in the war. In this sense it has become important to emphasize not merely such territorial arrangements as the peace will effect but the kind of economic situation in which the desired League of Peace would place Germany. A peace that would merely define the Allies' economic superiority will effect nothing of permanent worth. What Germany desires is free access to raw material, equality of opportunity in the undeveloped territories of the world. If we are prepared for these concessions it is clear enough that the solid strength of German opinion would favor the payment of the necessary price in territorial terms. A reply that should merely restate our belief in a league of peace is bound to arouse suspicions and thereby to strengthen junkerdom. It might have been satisfactory in December, 1916; but the situation as it stands to-day is radically different.

IT is difficult to estimate how far this has been grasped in London and Paris. Germany, so it seems to be argued, has been guilty of a criminal offence against Europe; and she must come upon her knees in quest of pardon. Some even suggest that no negotiations can be undertaken until she has withdrawn from Belgium and Northern France. Others shrug their shoulders and simply urge that no peace is worthy of consideration until Germany has been beaten into subjection. The still, small voice of a reason that will first examine and find out the uttermost worth of this adventure is notably absent. Nor is American opinion in advance of Allied judgment. Apart from a dim realization that the President discerns serious importance in the situation, it but palely reflects the anger of Paris and of London. The probability that the papal offer is tinged by the sentiments of Vienna and Berlin seems to have been fatal to its careful consideration.

GRANTED that the papal offer, as it stands, is unsatisfactory, downright rejection does not meet the situation. If Germany has been guilty of a crime, she is yet a criminal with whom we have to live. The obvious step to take is to use this offer as a means of probing her mind. There is evidence that she has been shaken out of her insane imperialism. The Reichstag has taken heart again, even after its defeat in the recent crisis. Herr Erzberger has not been bought off. The retirement of Count Esterhazy in Hungary suggests how eagerly the dual monarchy would welcome a settlement. The possibility of peace is too precious a thing to cast away lightly. Because it is not written clearly upon the face of these terms does not mean that it is not implied in them. Their significance opens a new epoch in the war.

AMERICANS should find no difficulty in understanding the attitude of the South Africans toward the Pope's proposal of restoration of the

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German colonies. How would the inhabitants of the British colonies in America have felt if after the French and Indian war it had been proposed to return Canada and the Ohio basin to France? Such an arrangement would have exposed the white settlers on the Atlantic seaboard to dangerous attacks by the redmen, armed and disciplined by the most ambitious and unscrupulous military power of eighteenth century Europe. The German colonies of southwest and southeast Africa occupy a geographical position that seriously menaces the peace of the South African commonwealth. The native black population is far more dense, and far more capable of acquiring military efficiency, than the Indians of North America ever were. Germany has proved herself more ambitious and more unscrupulous than the France of the ancient régime. There are accordingly the best of reasons why the South Africans, whether British or Boers, should be irreconcilable in their opposition to the restoration of the German colonies.

ENGLAND did not enter the war for the purpose of extending her colonial domain, or of gaining any sort of imperialistic advantage. As Mr. Asquith stated at the beginning of the war, "We have no desire to add to our Imperial burdens, either in area or in responsibility." No more did the United States make war upon Spain, in 1898, for the purpose of acquiring territory. By the fortunes of war, however, the United States found herself possessed of colonies which she did not need and which have represented a net burden upon her ever since. The fact of colonial expansion gravely compromised the moral position of the United States. There is not a *Realpolitiker* in the world who does not conceal a smile when he encounters the American claim that we attacked Spain out of altruistic enthusiasm for a free Cuba. If the present war ends with a great accession to the British colonial domain, to be exploited for the benefit of British nationals, it will be vain to try to convince the non-English speaking world that British motives were wholly pure. It is dangerous to return the German colonies to Germany; it is embarrassing for Britain to hold them. But why should they not become a common possession of the League of Nations, to be administered primarily in the interest of the indigenous population, and secondarily in the interest of all civilized nations that are willing to walk in the ways of decency and peace?

MILITARY activity along the whole western front appears steadily to increase in intensity, and now the Italians are showing extreme vigor in attack. It is impossible to escape the impression that these Allied offensives bear an intimate relation to the general peace movement that culminated in the Pope's message. If the Allied Powers intend to reject the Pope's suggestions altogether, offensive military operations would be a natural prelude to their official communications. If they intend to assume a receptive attitude toward proposals that may be susceptible of developing favorably under discussion, they would still have reason for making the best possible show of warlike energy. Quiescence on the battle front might produce a serious weakening in morale. And diplomacy cannot win a good peace unless it is in a position to fall back upon a readiness of the peoples to fight to the bitter end if it should be necessary.

SUBMARINE losses are declining at a very gratifying rate, according to the estimates made public by Lloyd George. For the last two months sinkings of British ships have been limited to 175,000 tons monthly. The British construction rate is 165,000 tons a month. The figures do not take account of the losses of Britain's allies and of the neutrals who perform freight service for them. But such additional losses are easily made good by American construction, even at present rates. We may therefore feel quite confident that when both the British and the American shipyards have attained to their maximum capacity, the volume of available tonnage will steadily increase, no matter what the submarines may do. The German policy of ruthlessness is thus once more proven futile.

GERMANY'S original defense of her submarine campaign rested upon extreme national necessity. In the submarine lay her only hope of a victorious conclusion of the war. Her armies might hold back the French and British, but nobody in Germany believed that the Allied line could be rolled up. If the seas could be swept of shipping, England would be driven to make peace on pain of starvation. Germany regretted the inevitable consequence, the accession of the United States to the ranks of her enemies. But with the seas cleared of ships, what could the United States do? Germany played for high stakes and lost. England will not be starved. American troops will be carried to France as soon as they are sufficiently trained, and in numbers quite sufficient to make good the wastage of the Allied armies. Is there, then, any reason for suspecting the sincerity of the German professions of willingness to treat for peace?

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STATECRAFT of a novel kind is being exhibited by someone in the United States Post Office. A ruling of the Post Office in respect to the August number of the Masses interrupted the use of the mails by that periodical. As a regular monthly publication the Masses enjoys what are known as second-class mailing privileges, but when the September issue was offered for mailing some luminous intellect in the government employment pronounced that as the Masses had missed the August issue it was an "irregular" publication and could therefore no longer be granted second-class privileges. The privileges have accordingly been taken away from the Masses. Such tactics may be admired as ingenious. They seem almost as invincible as the trick of the landlady who ejected a boarder because he had scarlet fever and then billed him for leaving without notice. But such hall-room statesmanship extends too far the abuse of the duties of the mail carrier. It is an egregious offense against common sense.

ABOUT the middle of the last century certain poor needlewomen of Philadelphia, employed in making uniforms for the army, petitioned the military authorities for an increase in wages, alleging—and proving their allegation—that their condition was one of extreme overwork and slow starvation. The petition was denied on the ground that to raise pay on government work would be unfair to private employers who were also paying starvation wages. This imperviousness of the military mind to the just demands of labor has not wholly disappeared. In reply to the charge of the New York City Employment Bureau that clothing contracts for the War Department are executed under sweating conditions, Quarter-Master General Sharpe deems it a sufficient reply that "no contract is awarded if the workshop is not sanitary." Repulsive sanitary conditions are indeed usually a part of the sweatshop evil. It is good to be reassured that our recruits will not be exposed to infection from the clothing furnished by the government. But the life and spirit can be ground out of the workers in sanitary shops almost as rapidly as in shops that are noisome. What we have a right to expect of the government is that it make the conditions of labor an essential concern in the awarding of contracts.

APPARENTLY there are to be many thousands of men drafted into military service who will have an honest conviction that there was injustice, or at least an inexcusable lack of understanding, in the rejection of their claims to be exempted because they had dependents to support. Certainly in many decisions announced by the exemption boards there has been close figuring which an unforeseen factor may upset. In these circumstances there is a political as well as a social reason why the Soldiers' and Sailors' Insurance bill should receive prompt attention in Congress. The measure is pending in both houses, and substitutes an orderly system of family allowances, indemnities and insurance for the desultory practices that have accompanied every previous war. If dependency is established, the government steps into the place hitherto filled by private charity and provides a respectable regular allowance, varying with the number of children in the family. The familiar practice of political jobbing, of bartering election support in return for a private pension bill, would at least temporarily disappear for want of material. That, in fact, will be the only reason for which Congress can refuse to give the bill an early hearing.

COAL prices as established by the President's order look very modest as compared with the prices that have prevailed recently. We may recall that when the operators, in a great burst of patriotism, pledged themselves to prices ranging fifty per cent above those now fixed by the President, there was no little murmuring in the trade over the prospective loss of opportunities for great profits. Certainly the President's action will reduce the yield of excess-profits taxation from the coal industry. There are predictions afloat that more serious consequences will ensue; that some mines will be closed and other mines forced to work at less than capacity. This is conceivable, at any rate. There are badly situated mines that have found it possible to operate profitably at the high prices their products command, and that may now find operation unprofitable. But the real limit upon coal production to-day is determined by the available labor supply. The better mines will easily absorb any labor release by the closing of the poorer ones. It is not at all impossible that the total output might be increased, rather than reduced, by such a readjustment of production.

GERMANY'S economic aims are self-contradictory if they are correctly represented in the press reports of the Vienna conference of the Central Powers. On the one hand Germany is planning to bind to herself Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey in an economic union. On the other hand she is laying plans for an enormous extension of her world trade. Her mercantile fleet is to be greatly increased through liberal construction sub-

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sidies. Now, if Germany actually intends to realize the Central European economic union, she may as well abandon her projects of overseas trade, as she knows very well. Her economic union will be confronted with an economic union of the nations now fighting her, and those nations control most of the commercial opportunities overseas. Besides, they control practically all the coaling stations and supplies of bunker coal. Germany already has more ships than she can use unless she can arrive at amicable trading relations with England and the United States. It appears to be a safe surmise that the project of a central European economic union has been created largely for diplomatic purposes. Germany means to realize it if at the peace she finds herself excluded from the overseas trade. She will abandon it if necessary in order to reëstablish the position in world trade she lost when she made war. She will do this for the simple reason that there is very little economic profit to Germany in the greatly over-advertised central European scheme, while there is enormous profit to be had from a restoration of world trade.

The President's Opportunity

THERE could be but one reception by European officialdom of the Pope's appeal to the belligerents. When President Wilson undertook to speak of a stable peace last January, to name the concessions and sacrifices that it would entail and the degree in which it would require common organization and a common mind, he evoked bitter opposition. Though the accent of disinterestedness was clear in every word of his message to the Senate, though there was candor as to the realities of the settlement and high illumination as to its purposes, a cloud of angry and indignant protestation enveloped the message and cast a slur on the purity of its aspiration. The prominence the President gave to international concert, the insistence he made on "a peace between equals," the distrust he showed for any arrangement pursued in the light of particular interests and immediate aims—all this brave and powerful emphasis on the necessity for negotiation brought him into the disfavor of partisan spokesmen. However the Pope's situation differs from the President's in January, however the text of his proposals is in contrast, the attitude of the belligerent powers in Europe seems not to have altered. Their reception of the new appeal shows that the inevitable concessions and sacrifices which must be made before a just peace can be secured are still as reluctantly admitted or even recognized as ever.

The impulse that led President Wilson to his declaration of last January was, however, a fundamental impulse springing from the deepest and sincerest sources of national purpose and character and it should enable him to respond to the Pope in terms which cannot be misconstrued. In January the President spoke as a disengaged friend of humanity with no direct responsibility in the war and little to lose if he offered generous counsel. To-day, the leader of a nation that has backed its unequivocal tradition with its arms, he has strengthened his position as to peace by putting the whole power of the United States behind it. The grip of the war now fastens on the United States. It reaches into American homes and takes our youth and strength. The distance between the roll of honor and the casualty list is discreetly shrouded. The embarkation of troops is stealthy. But no day passes that enlisted men do not march from their homes and friends to get in line to be supplied unremittingly to the trenches. There is no question as to the willingness of these new battalions to transfuse their fresh blood with the blood of depleted France and challenged England and convalescent Russia. The singleness of spirit, indeed, which promotes the large processes for overseas war is a striking revelation to the world of the health and communion of our nationalism. But the unstinted diversion of national vitality to European battlefields, attested to our eyes by every American who to-day wears the uniform that means departure for France, is not the lavish and exuberant outpouring of an excited people. The men and women of America have not clamored for this war. They have not invited it. Lending themselves faithfully to the sacrifice it imposes on them, they have done so only because they believe in their hearts that without their sacrifice the hopes of the world would be maimed.

It is idle to suppose that back of the conscripted youth of the United States there is not a national mind scrutinizing this fulfilment of national purpose. For every soldier that is to risk his life there are concerned and solicitous citizens. These citizens are willing to pledge their sons and brothers to the mighty purpose of ensuring the world. They are willing to wear mourning to-morrow if it means that Americans are dying for a reconstructed world. But in so far as the object of the war is obscured and the price of death is exacted without an accompanying political illumination and a reiterated pledge, the result will be wormwood and gall. There is only one thing that can repay Americans for seeing their children, the fruit of their care, yielded up to their country. It is not merely the clamor of an expediency or the pressure of continental immediacies. It is the full and clear adherence to a fruitful purpose commensurate with their sacrifice.

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The renewed opportunity to clarify this purpose, to lift it out from all the minor and confusing and selfish issues of the war, to indicate the tenor of American thought and the reservoirs of American strength and resolution, is now presented to the President. Not only France and England, but the people of Russia emerging into the policies of the war, will duly recognize the policies that make negotiation the preliminary step to everything for which America is fighting. Between the negotiation of bargaining and compromise and the negotiation of sanity and community there is the fundamental difference that the President has already clearly and invincibly defined. It is because of this that Americans look confidently to President Wilson to take the decisive step that will make a lasting peace possible. It is because of this that they may confidently expect the same courageous interpretation of purpose in the hour of war as when we could speak without being asked to make good our words. The perspective of our ideals the President has already set. The moment has come when he may help on their validation.

Peace Talk

RATHER more than a year ago Samuel Gompers forwarded to the English Trades Union Congress a suggestion that at the end of the war, when the diplomats were discussing the settlement, the labor organizations of the world should hold simultaneously a conference, by way of offsetting the purely diplomatic and governmental view. An orator at the Congress asked whether British workmen proposed to meet the murderers of their sons, the violators of women, the slaughterers of children. Mr. Gompers' proposal was rejected overwhelmingly. The oratorical question overlooked entirely, of course, the fact that British workmen would only meet German workmen when it had been decided that British diplomats and rulers should meet German. The decision of the Congress amounted, then, to saying this: "We are willing that British representatives should meet those Germans—representatives of their ruling classes—most responsible for the crimes of Germany. But we will not meet those Germans least responsible. We, whose political mission it is to check rulers and governments, to control them and on occasion to fight them, will leave this gravest of all matters entirely to them, and compel German workmen to do the same."

The vote was simply, of course, an explosion of natural, human and even excusable feeling. It was an act of impulse, like the act of the man who in a crowded theatre seeing flames cries "fire," and like the impulsive and quite natural and human stampede which follows, and which costs, it may be, hundreds of lives. Both acts, from the point of view of wisdom, reason, sense of responsibility and regard for that social discipline by which alone men can hope to live together in safety, are indefensible. The incident is recalled because of what has followed it.

The self-same men who voted so impulsively against Mr. Gompers' very conservative proposal are now ready to send their delegates to the Stockholm Conference, which Mr. Gompers very rightly regards as a far more radical step and one to which he refuses to agree. At first sight it is Mr. Gompers who is entitled to do the reproving: if his proposal of a year ago, which British labor rejected, was inadmissible, the proposal which they have now sanctioned is a fortiori still more so. One can imagine Mr. Arthur Henderson, or for that matter M. Albert Thomas, replying to Mr. Gompers somewhat in this strain: "You are acting exactly as we acted in the early stages of the war. We were all opposed to these contacts with the German peoples. We were opposed instinctively. But three years of war has shown that we were wrong. We have frankly been converted, not only in England, but in France. What was the minority position among the radical element has now become the majority position. Some of those who voted against communication with the enemy peoples have been to Russia and Stockholm. We have learned that by contact we can sometimes really teach the Germans things which it is immensely important from the point of view of Allied interest that they should know. A great impetus to the anti-governmental movement in Germany resulted from Scheidemann's visit to Stockholm and the things he learned there. We have learned that some at least in Germany really are fighting their government, and desire to reform or abolish it. And we have realized that whether they are able to do that or not depends largely upon us. It has taken English and French democrats three years to abandon our first position, the position which war naturally provokes a people to take up. Is it going to take the American democracy and its leaders three years to see things straight, instead of through the distorting mists of high feeling? Or are they going to benefit a little by our experience?"

Of course there is something to be said for Mr. Gompers' attitude at this present juncture. The country has just started upon a great war which at present it rather imperfectly understands. One of the great needs of the moment is to break down a certain underlying indifference throughout certain sections: to produce a real fighting "war spirit." How can you do that if you get the public, imme-

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diately after entering the war, talking peace? So everything in the way of rational discussion as how best to combine a sane diplomacy with our military measures is "peace talk." Just as Mr. Wilson's act in December last, when he begged the Allies to state more specifically their terms—a step which was entirely wise and which has been justified by events—was angrily condemned by the British public opinion as a "pro-German peace move" (it was neither a peace move nor was it pro-German), so now a dozen entirely distinct methods of achieving a certain end, none of them necessarily connected with an early termination of the war or negotiation with the enemy governments, are all described as "peace talk." A New York paper summarizes in its headline what it declares to be the Washington attitude toward the Pope's message thus: "Washington favors continuation of war," and regards that decision as settling the problem raised by the Pope's communication. Does the fact that Washington favors continuation of the war mean that the Pope's message is to be met with a flat refusal to discuss terms under any circumstances whatsoever? Or that the Allies cannot do so until Germany has stated her terms much more specifically? Or that the Allies are to indicate the points upon which they will need specific information—or what? All are perfectly compatible with continuing the war. Yet it is upon the answer that we give to these questions that depends not so much the duration of the war as its outcome; whether we are to achieve by it the results at which we aimed in entering it or fail utterly so to do, though the war went on half a generation, and the Allied armies occupied Berlin.

An English review, The New Europe, whose motto is "Pour la Victoire intégrale," the English of which in its case is "To the bitter end," a month or so ago printed this at the beginning of its leading article:

> Should the coming months bring defeat of the enemy so decisive as to compel him to sue for peace, the Allied governments would find themselves sorely embarrassed by the lack of a concrete programme of war aims. They would be obliged hastily to "exchange views" to summon conferences and to decide precipitately matters of principle and fact that demand the most earnest and conscientious study. The desire to make peace quickly would overpower their judgment and would inevitably lead to the sacrifice of certain indispensable safeguards of European welfare.

Yet anything which would make it possible for the Allied peoples to get a clear and definite program and agree upon it, is now taboo; it is all put down as "peace talk" as not "getting on with the war." With the result that we may come very near to being in about the position described by The New Europe.

Assume that the condition of the enemy, if not that of decisive defeat, is that of such embarrassment that he is in fact prepared to go a very long way toward the policy indicated by the Pope: restitution and restoration of Belgium and France and Serbia, Austrian abandonment of Italian territory, an independent Poland, plebiscite for Alsace-Lorraine, together with limitation of armament, a League of Nations, mutual economic rights of way and equality of opportunity, access to the sea, internationalization of its control. And assume that because we have worked out the implication of these things, and have no concrete policy for their realization, and suspect a German plot (the plot being to induce us to give a categoric refusal to discuss at all), we say "No" to the whole proposal. Then these things would happen: Germany would be strengthened and the Allies would be weakened, and military victory when it came—if come it did—would have lost its value as a means to the democratization of Germany and the internationalization of the world.

And that might well be just as true even though in any case the only defensible policy, whatever happens, is to go on fighting. Because, whether our victory is to be barren or fruitful depends upon whether, in fact, in the later stages of the war we are fighting the German government or the German people. And that will depend upon whether we can make our policy really clear to them. But that again would be "peace talk."

We shall miss the significance of a negative or merely barren reply unless we consider it in conjunction with the refusal of the British, French and American governments to allow Labor and Socialist delegates to attend the Stockholm Conference.

The Labor, Radical and Socialist parties of both France and England have definitely taken issue with their respective governments on that matter. Those parties have not come to their decision in haste, or as the result of some snap vote at some partial convention. They have been in large part pushed against their inclination thereto by the plain appeal of events. Rightly or wrongly they have come to believe that only by some such action can the nascent movement of the German people against their government grow into a real force and result in that democratization of Germany upon which the success of the war depends. The governmental attitude has resulted in an undoubted cleavage in France and England. And it has weakened the position of the democrats in Germany. It enables the German government to say to them: "These hopes that you hold out of a coöperative peace with the western democracies are illusive. Their governments won't even permit their peoples to meet

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you. We—the government—have proposed discussion between governments; they refuse. You, the democracy, have proposed discussion between peoples; they refuse. Why are they afraid to have even unauthorized folk discuss peace? We don't fear discussion. It is because they are bent upon your destruction." And so on. It is not a question of whether the German government would be sincere in such an attitude, but of the effect that it would have upon German morals and opinion as a whole.

Now, if this situation is followed up by such reply to the Pope that discussion is simply shut off, these two parallel tendencies—the tendency to widen the breach between the democrats and the government in England and in France and to bring people and government together in the case of Germany would be intensified. There are certain contradictions in our attitude which will add in any case to the difficulties of the German people in their struggle with their government, and the difficulties of our own relations with them. We declare that our quarrel is with the German government and not with the German people, and that finally we shall treat only with a government that is not the autocracy responsible for this war at all. And yet Allied organs—and certain American papers notably—are insisting upon the need for a punitive settlement. Thus the Tribune is not satisfied with the terms of the Pope's references to Belgium, namely: "On the part of Germany there should be total evacuation of Belgium, with guaranties of its entire political, military and economic independence toward any other power whatever." The Tribune says:

> To let Germany go home now, having wrecked Belgium, would be to establish the fact that there is no punishment for crime. The German attack upon France through Belgium failed, but it almost succeeded, and it would bring, under this proposal no permanent warning to the Germans.

But in demanding that there shall be "punishment for the crime," who will be punished at the peace? The reformed Germany, the German people with whom we declare we have no quarrel. If the Germans are to get as bad terms under a democratic government as under an autocratic one, does not that reflect upon the sincerity of our professions of belief in democratic government on the one hand, and of our friendliness to the German people as distinct from their rulers, on the other?

But the important point is that the insistence upon "punishment" whatever the form of government again tends to play into the hands of the autocracy. We may obtain "*punishment*" at the price of German freedom which, as Mr. Balfour explained the other day, is necessary to the freedom of the world.

Reconstructing the British Government

THE reconstruction of the English Cabinet has been in some sort the most striking constitutional change of the war. Nowhere has Mr. Lloyd George so ruthlessly broken with consecrated tradition. Nowhere has he, theoretically, at least, been so well able to make out an admirable a priori case for the innovations he has achieved. That a committee of twenty-two is beyond the size which makes possible that rapidity of decision so essential to the functioning of government was already clear enough. That the business of a modern government is too complex to make it humanly right to burden an already overworked Prime Ministry with any task save the general outlines of fundamental policy was already obvious. That the work of combining executive direction with leadership of the House of Commons was impossible no one would by 1916 have denied. Above all, it was obviously anomalous that an institution so vital should keep no record of its transactions.

All of this Mr. Lloyd George revolutionized at a single stroke. He abolished the cabinet. He substituted in its stead a kind of Venetian junta, over which he himself presided. Its fundamental object was to separate the conduct of the war from the conduct of administration. So one of his colleagues undertook the direction of the House of Commons; another busied himself with the leadership of the Lords. The erstwhile Cabinet Minister became simply the head of a department connected with his fellow ministers by an entirely new secretariat—the Prime Minister's Department. Record was taken of the business decided at meetings of the War Council. Inter-departmental difficulties were arranged through the Prime Minister's secretaries. The collective responsibility of the Cabinet disappeared for the reason that the Cabinet no longer existed. The Prime Minister was to visit the House only upon occasions that were decisive. His parliamentary colleagues would do the rest.

But government is, after all, very largely a matter of men. It is only when they work together on the basis of kindred ideals, like temperaments, common determinations, that the creaking juggernaught of administration rolls securely on its way. It needs, at least in a democratic state, the urgent assistance of Parliament and the generous acquiescence of the people as a whole. It is against exactly these difficulties that Mr. Lloyd George's scheme seems breaking down. The facts of political life seem unable to fit themselves into the categories he has evolved for them. That, in part at least, the disharmonies have been due to the inex-

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perience of novelty and the natural irritation of a coalition government is, of course, true. Yet those who study the technique of administration will be compelled to wonder if the change is in any degree a real advance upon the old.

Let us look at the facts. The War Council was to concern itself solely with general policy. Experience has revealed that you cannot so divorce general policy from the details of administration. You decide upon an offensive in Flanders. That means an increase of reserves. The War Office asks for men. You go to the expert in man-power who advises their withdrawal from agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture immediately complains that his plans make the surrender of any more labor impossible. A wrangle ensues between the Minister of War and the Minister of Agriculture, who have never had an opportunity of evolving a joint policy by common deliberation. The War Council makes its decision and earns the hearty distrust of one disappointed minister. Lord Curzon recently admitted in the House of Lords that most of the time of the War Council has been occupied in the adjustment of these internal disputes. The lesson we have learned is the confusion that results when technical control is divorced from executive control. Policy becomes blurred instead of clear. To ask the Prime Minister's department to settle a dispute is in no sense the same thing as hammering out an agreement across the table in 10 Downing Street. To be head of a department instead of a Cabinet Minister involves a certain intellectual isolation which prevents any real continuity of ideas. Yet it was exactly that collective continuity the War Council was intended to supply.

Internally, recent revelations suggest that the methods of the War Council do not work with the smoothness that might have been hoped. Sometimes, in this recent crisis, Mr. Henderson seems to have dealt privately with the Prime Minister; sometimes he saw Mr. Bonar Law and Lord Milner together; sometimes the Prime Minister was absent from the conference. When the entire council did meet, Mr. Henderson, so we are told, was kept outside in order that his feelings might not be hurt. Nor is that all. Mr. Henderson hears of the position of his affairs not from the Prime Minister, but from Mr. G. N. Barnes and the Pall Mall Gazette. The constitution of the War Council seems to vary with astonishing rapidity. General Smuts has been invited to occasional meetings. Sir Edward Carson having, to all appearances, failed at the Admiralty, is hurriedly added to its membership probably as a proud defiance to the East Clare election. On Mr. Henderson's resignation, Mr. G. N. Barnes, utterly without experience in la haute politique, is summoned to his place; which virtually means that a labor voice which did on occasion speak firmly is replaced by one which cannot speak simply from ignorance and cannot, when it does speak, claim to be representative. One day, maybe, the War Council will publish the minutes of its deliberations and we shall then be the better able to judge of its fruition.

Meanwhile, certain provisional conclusions emerge as to its executive functioning. No coherent scheme of policy has been evolved. The kind of criticisms that are made are exactly similar in nature to the kind of criticisms that were made of Mr. Asquith's administration—only they are made more bitterly. The only device the War Council seems to favor as new problems arise is to create a new board to meet it. On every hand the personnel is subject to constant change. Victories and defeats over the liquor interests are announced monthly. Great schemes of national service are set on foot; and then the Director resigns because he finds nothing to do. Food controllers do not control. The Munitions Department is now, for the most part, an extension of the old labor conciliation department of the Board of Trade. The agonized hesitations of the Board of Agriculture are written large in the speeches of its President. The Board of Education is jauntily relegated to a national museum. Meanwhile on fundamental problems, the problem of peace, the problem of Ireland, the problem of reconstruction, we have no policy of any coherent sort. From Home Rule Ireland has come to demand an independent republic. The reconstruction committee has gone into bankruptcy; and the new ministry of reconstruction is the laughing-stock even of the House of Commons. On peace we know what the Labor party thinks, we know the opinions of a few distinguished publicists. But from the government we have only demands for patience and Mr. Lloyd George's researches into animal biology for adequately descriptive terms of the German position. It is pathetically distracting.

Above all, perhaps, the new scheme has broken down in its relation to the House of Commons. Here the supreme test is to be found in the increasing unwillingness of Parliament to grant large credits without any means of checking up the sources of expenditure. It is, maybe, the turning of the worm. But, at any rate, it is a turning. The penumbra of this result is clear enough. The division of leadership, as Mr. Lloyd George conceived it, was theoretically admirable; but to work it needed a man who was a supreme parliamentarian. Now whatever Mr. Bonar Law may be he is not that; and the result is that Mr. Asquith, from the front opposition bench, leads the House.

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Even with Mr. Churchill Mr. Bonar Law was unable to cope; and it is said that the secret sessions of the House were pathetic on that account. It is this that probably explains Mr. Churchill's return to power. Somehow opposition had to be conciliated. Nor could Mr. Law make headway against free lances like Mr. Pringle and Mr. Hogge. They only knew gossip of course; but that was sufficient to throw him into confusion. Nor have Mr. Lloyd George's visits to the House been much more fortunate. His exordium would have been admirable if he only had spoken; but Mr. Asquith's significant reference to future revelations aroused speculation instead of stilling it. It was Mr. Asquith who saved him from defeat over the Indian cotton duties. It was Mr. Asquith whose plea for the Irish convention saved it from certain disaster at a time when its prospects were black. It was Mr. Asquith who rescued Mr. Lloyd George in the crisis over Mr. Henderson's resignation. And it is Mr. Asquith who, at the same time, sits on the front opposition bench.

The House, moreover, is growing increasingly resentful under this manifold direction or the lack of it. Mr. Lloyd George may not have time to attend to the House; but he can go to an Eistedfodd, or to have an honorary degree, or to attend a great public meeting. He seems determined to slight the House of Commons by making his fundamental pronouncements outside its precincts, and the House has been quick to resent it. The way in which the volume of criticism within the House is growing is suggestive of a regeneration of its former insignificance. From impatience of detailed mistakes it is becoming impatient of general policy, and a day may well come when Mr. Asquith is no longer willing to be generous.

As a development in administrative technique, then, Mr. Lloyd George's innovations have hardly proved themselves in the working. To exercise the power he invokes, he would have had to be elected by a plebiscite instead of a Cabinet intrigue which still baffles popular understanding. He has no such assurance of support. Moreover his ministry is pluralistic not merely in its execution of policy, which is legitimate, but in its purpose, which is indefensible. It does not create a ministerial mind. It does not act as a group-will, with a group purpose. It is a series of discreet appearances united neither by common aims nor common friendship. It has not the support that comes from the trial of its ability in the House of Commons; for dictatorial nomination has not replaced parliamentary selection as an effective method of appointment. It secures administration. It does not secure the coördination of administration with policy which is government. It is a method that lacks any central idea. It is an arch without a keystone. Upon its ultimate future it is too early to pronounce any judgment. But this much already may be prophesied: that in its fundamental outlines it does not possess the elements of obvious permanence. The kind of cabinet over which Mr. Asquith presided, smaller, perhaps, but not substantially different in form, still remains the most valuable contribution of English political history to the structural experiments of government.

Mass Saving as a War Resource

THE rich alone cannot finance the war. After all, it is only a quarter of our national income of forty billions that falls to families enjoying incomes of $2,500 and upward. We should, of course, levy upon this quarter just as heavy direct taxation as considerations of fiscal productivity permit. But what is the maximum yield we may expect from such taxation? Only a financial optimist can expect so much as two billions. Another quarter of our national dividend falls in family incomes ranging from $1,200 to $2,500. What yield can we reasonably expect from incomes of this class? Direct taxation would not be highly productive here; to convince ourselves of this we have only to contemplate the political effect that would be produced by an attempt to subtract $250 from a salary of $2,500 or better, $150 from a salary of $1,500. Some direct taxation this class of incomes will stand; by such taxation combined with indirect taxes on luxuries of wide use we might possibly secure a billion dollars from these moderate incomes. War profits, which may be treated as a chance income super-added in our calculations, might yield another billion. Without trenching upon family incomes under $1,200, we may thus raise a tax revenue of at most four billions. But our financiers are calculating in terms of tens of billions.

It is true the more fortunate part of our income recipients may be counted upon to furnish additional financial resources through subscriptions to bond issues. Taxation so drastic as we have assumed would greatly reduce the capacity of these classes to invest in bonds. Besides there is a heavy drain upon their saving power in the necessary additions to capital required by the war industries. Even if ordinary investments are restricted to a minimum and if living expenditures are severely curtailed, it is impossible to believe that these two income classes can make up, through subscriptions to loans, the six billions above any probable tax revenue required for our first year of war. It is therefore incumbent upon our financial authorities, by one device or another, to tap the financial resources

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represented by twenty billions of income falling to persons who receive $1,200 or less.

It needs no extended argument to show that the methods of taxation can not be extensively applied to this body of income. With prices at their present level, many of the families whose incomes fall in this class find it extremely difficult to command the bare necessities of health and working efficiency. It is impossible to devise a scheme of taxation that will fall upon the small incomes that could bear some reduction without falling still more heavily upon those that will not bear reduction. Excises on sugar, coffee and tea, for example, might well be borne by the wage earner who has no family to support. But they will fall much more heavily upon the wage earner who is struggling hard to maintain a family in proper conditions of health and decency. Taxes on retail sales, favored by certain financial authorities on account of their great productiveness, would also bear with a special weight upon those who are already over-burdened. It is true that there are luxuries of general use, such as tobacco and alcoholic beverages, that the wage earner who has a family to support can forego. These may properly be subjected to the maximum practicable rates of taxation. But there is no reason for anticipating much new revenue from such sources, in view of the heavy taxation they already bear.

While our twenty billions of small incomes can not be made to yield any considerable tax revenue, they nevertheless cover a body of surplus income that our financial authorities ought to exploit through loans. Our average wage earner receives between $600 and $700 per annum. This is less than current needs require, if he has children to support, or an invalid wife, or lives in a community where expenses are high. It is sufficient to make practicable some saving if the worker is single, and about a quarter of our wage earners of twenty and over are single. It is also sufficient to make saving practicable for families with more than one wage earner, especially in communities where living costs are relatively low.

It is difficult to estimate the potential saving power concealed in the mass of petty incomes of the United States. But Great Britain has undertaken systematically to cultivate this saving power among her own small income classes, with the result that in the first four months of 1917 nearly £60,000,000 of national loans were placed with these classes. This would indicate a savings rate of $1,200,000,000 a year in a population less than half that of the United States and with average earnings not more than two-thirds of those prevailing here. It does not seem an excessively optimistic view that our small incomes might be made to yield between two and three billions in war loans. All classes ought to be taxed in the ratio of investments per annum, if we had the appropriate machinery for developing this financial resource.

But how are we to reach this vast multitude of small income recipients and exert upon them persuasion to make every possible saving for investment in war loans? We have in our postal system an instrumentality through which an appeal could be presented, within a week, to almost every person in the country. We have already organized a postal savings system that is accessible to a fair proportion of our citizens. When we created the system we had to base it upon principles that were not objectionable to our private savings institutions. We had to offer them a guaranty that the postal savings bank would not compete with them, and therefore we fixed the rate of interest at two per cent—too little to attract any depositors who believed in the solvency of the private institutions. As a result we have only five postal savings bank depositors where Japan, for example, has one hundred. This state of affairs may have been desirable in peace. But in time of war we can not be overscrupulous of the interests and the prejudices of private institutions when every dollar saved means additional military power.

What we should do now is to raise the postal savings rate to four per cent, investing in government bonds the savings as they come in. When each account has reached a specified minimum, say one hundred dollars, we could exchange it for a four and one-half per cent bond, thus gradually diffusing such securities among the population. Every post office, and in the larger cities every substation, ought to receive deposits, and something would be gained if every letter carrier were required to sell savings stamps for small sums. All this would involve a vast mass of petty business, to be sure, but only universal and detailed effort can collect for national use the numberless small sums that now trickle away to no useful purpose.

Official initiative in this matter would have to be supplemented by all manner of associated activities if it is to attain important results. The labor organizations, the friendly societies, the churches and schools would have to be enlisted in the cause of national thrift if the curse of meanness that still rests upon its exercise is to be lifted. Here we might profit by the example of the Food Administration, which has already succeeded in instilling in millions of minds the conception that food waste is a petty form of treason. Indeed, a thrift administration might well work in coöperation with the Food Administration. The former might offer bonds to give concrete reality to the economies that the latter fosters.

Successful war finance involves both taxation and

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their ability; all classes ought to subscribe to loans in the ratio of their surplus income. Both the payment of taxes and subscription to loans result in a reduction in the consumption of goods and services, thus releasing materials and men for military use. For the rich this reduction in consumption is relatively easy; they should therefore be expected to bear the chief burden of taxation. For the poor it is relatively hard, and therefore they should rather be induced to reduce consumption through the offer of attractive investments than be compelled to do so through taxation. Such a division of function would be salutary also in its post-bellum effects. The rich man who has retained his capital intact will be the stronger economically for having been compelled to retrench in his expenditure in war time. The poor man who has succeeded in acquiring some little reserve in the form of income-bearing securities has established a habit that will serve to ease his difficulties in periods of irregular employment and strengthen him in the industrial conflict.

The Japanese Mission

THE Tokyo Foreign Office has announced, in effect, that the Japanese Mission to the United States would not attempt while here any very definite negotiations. Without being acquainted with the nature of Viscount Ishii's instructions, it would seem safe to apprehend that this official statement, while doubtless correct, is, nevertheless, somewhat misleading. There are certain questions before Japan and the United States that require present discussion and settlement. Japan desires steel plates for ship construction. The United States and the Allies desire the Japanese Government to place Japan's shipping in common service against Germany. Important as these matters may be, however, it is unlikely that they furnish the raison d'être for the advent of these distinguished visitors. The Japanese Government is now formulating its plans for the settlement after the war. Japan has one chief interest, and one only. All other questions are subordinate, and all policies are shaped with a view to one end. That end is China. It is essential that Japan should form a just estimate of the American attitude toward China and Japan's relation thereto. The Japanese Mission, therefore, it is safe to assume, has come to study rather than to negotiate. Information gathered now will serve to guide the development of Japan's policy in the great Peace Conference.

If this be the task of the Mission, it is difficult. There is no intelligent public opinion in this country on Far Eastern affairs. There is prejudice against, and suspicion of, Japan. There is admiration of the Japanese as "the wonderful little people." But there is little comprehension of modern Japan, of her needs and her ambitions. Much of the prejudice and suspicion are unwarranted, and much of the praise both fatuous and patronizing to the point of being offensive to a sensitive and justly proud people. Americans generally are at present indifferent. Events may so shape themselves that a real interest in the Orient may be aroused, and with its awakening there would inevitably be a change of attitude which would be reflected in our diplomacy.

For the moment, however, American attention is focused on the war, first in its bearing on our domestic situation, second on its development in Europe. Japanese statesmen are mainly concerned with the possible effects of the war and the peace that is to come on their position in the Far East.

Japan is comparatively poor in natural resources. There is some coal and timber, a little iron and copper, but for her future Japan must rely primarily on her man power. Industry has made rapid strides in recent years. Its continued development is dependent upon the supply of raw material, facilities for collection and distribution, and markets. A merchant marine has been created and is constantly increasing in relative importance owing to the ravages of the submarine. China furnishes iron, coal and other basic articles, and a great market. China, therefore, is the keystone of the Japanese diplomatic arch. But in Japan there have been two schools of thought. The group of soldier and sailor statesmen, representatives of the Satsuma and Choshiue clans that have so long controlled Japan's destinies, have felt that to assure in future the supplies and markets which were required, Japan must dominate China virtually by force of arms. Their attitude and their writings are responsible for much of the antagonism and suspicion with which their country is regarded. Another group of younger men, now apparently in the ascendant and led, strangely enough, by the present Premier, Marshal Count Terauchi, himself a soldier, have advocated a less chauvinistic course. They recognize that Japan will inevitably profit by the development of China; that Japan alone cannot finance this development. They realize that the Chinese resent Japanese domination and that European and American capital would be reluctant to enter China under Japanese auspices. For these reasons they hope that Occidental bankers will increase their investments. But they are fearful lest in the future as in the past the Chinese may endeavor to utilize the support which such investments might bring to attempt to exclude Japanese enterprise from China. The present Japanese Government, therefore, while wishing to encourage foreign investment in China, desires to

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coöperate therein in so far as Japanese resources permit. Furthermore, to prevent the Chinese from balancing one foreign power against the other by granting conflicting contracts or concessions, Japan desires recognition of her special interest in China. This she feels would assure peace in the Far East. In return she is prepared again to reaffirm her support of the principle of the " Open Door " and the equality of commercial opportunity.

During the past three years Japan has greatly strengthened her position in China. Her influence is powerfully exerted upon all the contending factions in Chinese politics. The manner in which this influence is obtained may be open to question. That is another story. The fact remains that troubles in China act as preventives against extensive foreign investment and that Japan fears such foreign investment for the reason above stated, unless her own position is safeguarded. It might be a safe speculation, though frankly a speculation, to assume that troubles in China would be greatly lessened in case Japan's relationship with China was recognized on the basis mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

Since the war German activity in China has been chiefly confined to intrigue. The British, French, Russian and Japanese Governments and their bankers have made, within certain bounds, common cause. European financial markets have been closed to Chinese loans. The United States, however, has been neutral, and American bankers looked to foreign fields. American finance was to some extent encouraged to play a lone hand in China.

Until the United States entered the war, Japan's fears of an American advance in China were tempered by two factors; first, the practical certainty that in offering contracts to American bankers the Chinese would endeavor to create a conflict over some already existing claim; and second, reliance upon the support of the Allies should an issue arise with the United States over Chinese affairs. The United States, moreover, was wholly unprepared for war, if such an eventuality were contemplated. Japanese statesmen, nevertheless recognizing the limitations of Japanese finance, made overtures to secure American coöperation.

Then came the Russian Revolution, which deprived Japan of the support of an autocratic Government at Petrograd. Finally the United States entered the war. Our naval program was increased, the conscription act was passed. Japanese statesmen found their problem aggravated. The Allies were counting on American support. Japan's need of securing recognition of her position in China was equally imperative, but her statesmen were obliged to treat with the United States as a powerful ally rather than as a rather unpopular neutral.

In the meantime, however, perhaps by a strange coincidence, conditions in China became such that a large American loan which had been discussed could not have been issued. Conditions in China are still chaotic. No loan is likely, and the Japanese Mission has come to make a survey of the situation.

Ship plates, tonnage, immigration, the right to land tenure and treaty revision are all matters that may or may not be considered. The real problem between Japan and the United States is the future of China. Yet it is difficult to call it a problem between the two countries. To Japan it is vital. To the United States an understanding just to Japan and just to China is important, but the factors to be weighed are not generally appreciated. The Ishii Mission is wise, therefore, to discount in advance its accomplishments. Japan is endeavoring to consolidate her position prior to the Peace Conference. She may have already obtained assurances from her other allies as to her position vis à vis China, but there would seem to be no reason why the American Government should definitely commit itself, if at all, until this question is threshed out at the international council table. By the same token, however, our diplomacy should avoid needlessly offending Japan by lack of frankness as to our dealings with China. Otherwise China may again be encouraged to count upon American support against what she considers Japanese aggression. It may or may not be wise to exercise our influence on China's behalf at this or some future time. But if exercised at all, it should be done practically and effectively by financial aid and administrative guidance. Otherwise history may repeat itself, and the Chinese make bold to stand against Japan only to find that their rainbow has been dissipated and they are left alone to reap the harvest of Japanese displeasure.

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The Strategy of "Economic Peace"

THE original belligerents have entered the fourth year of the war with a perceptible shock of self-consciousness. It is no ordinary milestone that we have passed. Kitchener's prediction had sunk deep into the popular mind which expected our journey's end at the close of the third year. It is the natural human anxiety to avoid a fourth winter which gives to the answering speeches of British and German statesmen the interest of words laden with fate. The approximation in these speeches is slight, but it is still perceptible. Mr. Lloyd George talks no longer of the "knock-out blow," and lays stress on the most moderate and inevitable of our demands—the claim for "restoration." Mr. Balfour and Lord Robert Cecil go out of their way to speak of Austria in respectful and almost friendly terms, and the gesture brings in response the semi-official suggestion that Austria might possibly serve as a mediator between England and Germany. There is still no official echo on our side to the German and an Austrian formula of a "peace of reconciliation." In most of our newspapers the old recriminations, and the passionate rehearsals of partisan versions of the war's origin, rage with redoubled vehemence. If there is among moderate men a disposition to welcome the peace movement in the Reichstag as a possible avenue toward a settlement, it is hesitating and uncertain as yet, and finds expression chiefly in quarters whose thinking invariably moves faster than that of the majority. None the less the process of examining our essential war aims with critical eyes and a sharp pruning knife has begun in earnest, and the statesmen conduct across the thunder of the trenches a conversation which turns upon the future. The polemics of Lord Grey and the late Chancellor had dealt exclusively with the past.

When at length the conversation does begin in earnest, it will inevitably move upon the framework of the Reichstag's resolution. Demands for territorial change occupy the foreground of all the public discussion of war aims among the Allies. The emphasis in this resolution lay heavily on the economic issue, and Dr. Michaelis underlined it in his speech. The enemy is prepared to renounce all forcible acquisition of territory, but he insists that after the war he must have "economic peace." The demand was skilfully draped in language which had a disinterested and almost idealistic tone. It conveyed its protest against our schemes for an economic war after peace by suggesting that our boycott would set enmity between nations, poison their future intercourse, and ruin the prospect of any peace of reconciliation, and these considerations led up to the final undertaking of the Reichstag majority to work for the organization of the idea of public right between nations. In this idealistic language there was doubtless an element of sincerity. No one can fail to note the new elevation of tone, the stretching out toward a higher international morality in certain influential circles in Germany and Austria, more especially among Catholics. Some leaven, half religious, half ethical, is at work amid the ruin and disillusion of war. Beneath this more elevated thinking, one discerns very clearly a strain of realism and shrewdness. "We will drop conquests, if you will abandon economic boycotts"—that in crude words is really the substance both of the Reichstag's resolution and of the new Chancellor's speech.

When the Paris resolutions were first framed, they did not appear to excite much alarm in Germany. The two Americas and China were still outside the ring fence which the Allies were then hammering together. To-day the prospect is that any sullen and ill-natured peace, any mere truce of mutual exhaustion, would involve the closing to German trade of almost the whole world overseas. On the worst construction she stands to lose not merely her trade with the original members of the Entente, but her commerce with the United States, her raw materials from Brazil, and the open door to China. With the original Entente she might have waged a precarious economic war: to combat the present world-wide combination would be ruin. It is this nightmare of a dangerous economic future which is working, more powerfully than any other factor, for moderation in Germany. The settlement presents itself to-day to the German mind as a barter of military conquests on land against this menace at sea and over-seas. The long-drawn drama of the war is extending itself into the diplomatic sphere. A military occupation may become a permanent conquest. A naval blockade may continue as an economic boycott. Land power is still pitted against sea power, and the settlement is at bottom a problem in dynamics. What is the equation between the German ability to hold the occupied territories, and our ability to prolong the blockade as a commercial encirclement? Assume for argument's sake that the present position is static—that we cannot by our periodic offensive in the west break the German power on land, and that they cannot by the submarine campaign break the Allied su-

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premacy at sea. Does the equation balance? The first tentative German suggestion is apparently that the balance is fairly exact. They will barter their conquests against our boycott. A good peace must mean more than this. It must involve a drastic reduction of armaments as a guaranty for the safe working of a League of Nations. It must include some satisfaction, though it be in the nature of give and take, for the more urgent of our claims of nationality.

The Germans assume that a bargain on these lines is possible. If we grant that assumption, the task of assessing the relative compelling force of the military and economic factors will still be difficult. Do the Germans, for example, dread the economic boycott sufficiently to cede the Metz district, to say nothing of Alsace? Do the Allies in general, and the French in particular, care enough for Alsace to pay for it with a general "most favored nation clause," or by breaking down the French colonial tariffs? That is the central question which the whole society of the Alliance has to face, and none is more urgent. At present we are thinking in a disorganized, disconnected way about Alsace and Poland, Jugoslavs and Tchecho-Slovaks, turning from sentiment to strategy, and measuring everything save our own biggest asset. We do not yet know whether it is an asset. The Germans, as usual, are thinking out their problem in a more connected and competent way. After a long internal struggle, a decisive majority has established the preliminary principle that their military occupations are not ends in themselves, but only means towards a good negotiated peace. With that decision they became assets. Our similar internal struggle has yet to come. No majority in our Parliament has authorized the Cabinet to drop the Paris Resolutions, if thereby it can secure guaranties for the ending of militarism, and the satisfaction of nationality. A large section of British and French public opinion regards this program of boycotts and exclusions and restrictions as an end in itself, a substantive war aim. It would bear the failure to create a League of Nations with equanimity, and if it had to choose between a monopoly of West African trade and the liberation of the Tchecho-Slovaks, it would go hard with that interesting race. The Reichstag has dealt with its Junkers, and thereby won an asset. We have not yet dealt with ours and what may be an asset is not yet thrown into the common stock. When the decision has to be taken, we may find that the Allies are not agreed among themselves, and our most formidable instrument of pressure may be wielded by uncertain hands.

The ideal plan would be that the entire combination—the United States, Brazil and China, no less than the original Entente, should say to the Central Powers "Economic peace is open to you on certain conditions. Evacuate your conquests. Join us in reducing armaments. Pledge yourselves to the procedure of a League of Nations. Make your difficult and painful contribution to European conciliation, by ending the feud over Alsace, and reassure us about the future of the Slavs of Austria-Hungary. In return we renounce all discrimination in tariffs or shipping facilities against you; our colonial markets are open to you; the door of China is not slammed on your enterprise, and in the inevitable regulation of the world's supplies of raw materials, your industry may reckon on its fair share. End militarism and we will give you economic peace." That is the inevitable dialogue between land power and sea power. It is the formula of a peace of reconciliation.

There is one motive which ought to lead the whole of our combination to a prompt decision of this central question. The fate of Russia depends on it. One must pass in silence over other anxious questions—how long France can endure the present rate in the reduction of her male population, how many Poles will be left alive to receive their promised independence. No censorship hides Russia's agony. The shame of the retreat is confessed, the confusion of her distracted politics admitted. Her economic situation is outlined when we recall that the exchange value of the rouble is less than half, and its purchasing power about one-eighth, of the pre-war rate. One faintly pictures the condition of the villages, in which the peasants seize the land of the gentry, only to discover that they have neither implements nor seed with which to till it. The shadow of famine may fall with winter. The rash though gallant decision to conduct an offensive led to the revolt of the wilder section of the Socialists, who argued that Russia ought to have rested passive on her arms, until the Entente revised its war aims. The confusions which followed that mad revolt have driven the Provisional Government to base itself more on the relatively powerless middle class, and less on the dominant revolutionary proletariat. It is now risking by its fidelity to the Entente the confidence of the more sober Socialist element. It may find itself to-morrow in open conflict with Tcheidze, Tseretelli, and the main body of the "Soviet," as it was yesterday in conflict with Lenine and the Left. There is no way of escape save through a constituent Assembly, which will elect a responsible government. In spite of the precise fixing of dates, can one count on the meeting of a constituent Assembly while these confusions continue? Can these confusions end before the coming of peace? The plain fact is that peace has become for Russia a necessity, a matter of life

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and death, and a protracted war must mean in some form dictatorship, and the moral collapse of the revolution. The Russians themselves have made their repeated appeals to us to revise our war aims. When they urge us to drop annexations and to abandon imperialism, I am not sure that they have grasped the whole problem. On the one hand the economic boycott is an obstacle to peace, no less fatal than forcible annexations: on the other hand it may be possible by an adroit use of it to extract assent to some salutary territorial changes. The peril of Russia, dire as it is and fraught with the gravest consequences for European freedom, ought not to lead us to contemplate a peace that compromised our essential purpose. It ought to drive us with all the speed we can command, to agree among ourselves upon this central question. Are we jointly prepared to bargain economic peace against restoration, disarmament, and some concessions to nationality, or are we, each of us for our own ends, to pursue a policy of economic exclusion as a substantive aim?

H. N. Brailsford.

Muteness in the State Department

During the past few weeks, while discussion of the existing war and the future peace has been given activity by the Pope's project of mediation and by various political events in Great Britain, Germany and Austria-Hungary, there have been appearing in the American press daily accounts of the successive attitudes and interpretations of the American government. The Associated Press and the special Washington correspondents have agreed that while the government was ready to give ear to sincere peace talk it would await specific proposals from the German government itself—and nothing, so far, had come from Germany which could not safely be discredited. The government was also ready to welcome indications of a political reform within the German empire, but it thought that what indications had appeared, up to this point, needed to be taken cautiously. It was appreciative of the spirit in which the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs had invited the United States to make its voice heard in future Allied conferences, but it did not believe that the invitation would meet acceptance. The policy of the American government, as the New York Times correspondent found it, was to be dictated by a conviction that American influence would "be stronger the longer it holds aloof from political discussions before the time comes for peace conferences."

These are important statements. In fact, in the attaining of those objects for which war was declared, they report developments to which the British advance in Flanders, or a declaration of the President's purpose to draft another half million men for army service, are necessarily secondary. Secure as the impression seems to be in the minds of many statesmen and publicists, the United States did not declare war for the purpose of abandoning international politics—that is, "peace talk"—but to concentrate its interests there with telling force. It had the definite aim of effecting as rapidly as possible the most universally desirable peace that was possible. Its belligerency, certain people hoped and other people feared, was presumably to make an intellectual as well as a military contribution to the war. Certainly the nature of the offensive to which the country was pledged by its government clearly subordinated army maneuvres to political considerations—and it is this subordination that gives to the recent direct or inspired utterances of the State Department their full importance. Despite the best efforts of many newspapers, public attention cannot be dislodged from its close scrutiny of purposes and steps in the attainment of purposes. If the attitude of the government in respect to recent peace expressions and German political reform and American political isolation are correctly reported in the press there will be disagreeing estimates of the insight which the government is disclosing; but there will be supplied what is chiefly essential: a studied, authoritative statement of government conclusions, in which any popular movement to affect the course of the war may have a sound premise.

The suspicion is occasionally raised, however, that such statements as the pronouncements of the government upon recent European political events are neither studied nor authoritative. The absence of any direct assignation to the State Department or its agents raises, in the minds of those who look for such assignation, a doubt as to how authoritative the statement can be without it. If that doubt is downed, there is still cause for uneasiness in the fact that certain reasonings seem to be the result of hurry or misunderstanding, and not of the study which the size of the subject matter merits. An instance is the sort of reasoning that can by any path lead to a conclusion that "the influence of the United States will be stronger the longer it holds aloof from political discussions before the time comes for peace conferences."

Not to form an unsophisticated judgment of the study and authority behind the ordinary newspaper account it is necessary to be familiar with the methods by which the State Department communicates its ideas to the press. Before the war a corre-

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spondent was at liberty to discuss current developments with bureau chiefs and with various agents of a specialized experience. At present, in the interest of keeping expressions of policy unified, newspapermen are permitted to consult with only the head or the acting head of the Department. This consultation is arranged in two daily conferences, amounting perhaps to forty minutes' time. The correspondents, varying in number with the novelty of the news that is anticipated, are entirely in the position of defendants. It is their duty to prove, each day afresh, the theory that their journals are entitled to news, and not their privilege to offer the Department a convenient means of scattering the ideas so essential in preventing its ultimate failure. The interest which each correspondent has in that limited phase of the situation upon which his newspaper is most insistent leads to a running fire of unrelated inquiries. Unless the correspondent is fortunate enough to secure, later in the day, a few moments for his own purposes, and only the press associations can ordinarily be so fortunate, his share in interpreted news is only what he can glean indirectly. In a desire to make the most of a brief opportunity, random questions, and occasionally unfair ones, are addressed to the Secretary, or his representative, before the previous question has been well answered. Moreover, even the short time that it is thought can profitably be given to the making of public opinion is interrupted by the insistence of congressmen and other visitors convinced of the importance of their errands. In such circumstances it is not strange that the head or the acting head of the Department should ordinarily refuse to be publicly responsible for the phrases in which the correspondents receive their suggestions.

Accordingly, the reporter, denied the opportunity of direct quotation, is forced to hint at the authorship of his information. He must resort to a vague reference to "high officials" and "administration circles." And in this practice an invitation is offered to trickery. For it is an easy matter for any reporter to write an implication of authority into his opening paragraph. It can be done by the correspondent who has no other aim than that of finding his news with as little search as possible; and it can be done, and is frequently done, by the correspondent who knows with what edge his employer's axe is being ground. There are many newspapers, for instance, conquer-or-die newspapers, whose editors believe willingly that when a country goes to war to win peace it ought to outlaw all discussion of the peace it is trying to win. It is no trouble at all for the Washington agent of one of these newspapers to find the government ready to declare that all discussion of peace in a time of war is traitorous; and by utilizing the familiar idiom—"officials high in administration circles declared to-night"—there may be cultivated the same sense of authority that is contained in the account of another reporter who was not able to ascribe his less imaginative information to its official authorship. It is not an indictment of Washington correspondents as a group to admit the abuses of a system where the system itself is encouraging to abuses.

Nor is it the possibility of the unauthoritative account that is most disturbing. It is rather the certainty that seldom can an account be genuinely thorough. The work of preparing fighting forces is being attended to with the highest possible concentration of trained experts and enormous expenditures. The work of preparing public opinion need not be done on the same scale; but it ought not be done in a way that makes complete public understanding of purpose so little likely. In the present method of conferences there must necessarily be gaps for the reporters to fill in—frequently supplying an answer to the question that had no chance to be asked, or that was ignored, not because official comment was in any way hazardous, but because official brains had made no plans for the possible effects of its reception into public opinion. There must also be a disagreement between reporters as to how much was implied by this statement or that, how much was being held back, how much clearer things would have been if a principal question had been put more pointedly. Under the present order, the forming of popular political ideas is no business with which the State Department is concerned, but a job in the interpretation of vague and more or less indifferent admissions, to be performed entirely from the outside by a score of not even half-informed reporters. Meantime, to fight for these ideas, thousands of specialists in powders, cannons and railways have been called to Washington to assist in the work of preparation.

There is a case to be made for the more unreserved communication to the public of political developments, for a fuller knowledge of how minority and majority opinion is being shaped in all belligerent countries, for a rushing to the aid of Russia of that moral support which Mr. Root reports is so imperatively needed—the support of a definitely non-imperialistic war purpose. The initiation of such a policy of thinking in public rests with the President. But there is a more immediate choice that can be made by the State Department itself. If public judgment of political developments is a factor in a war which is being fought exclusively for a political idea, there is danger in permitting public judgment to be misdirected. The State Department may be convinced, either by its own

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reasoning or by advice from a higher agency, that full frankness in every respect is not desirable—because full frankness might block the achievement of a political object. But it must also be convinced that it is unwise for the scattering of misinformation to be made possible by its own inexpertness in reaching the public. News that treats fundamental considerations irresponsibly is worse than no news, and the recent accounts purporting to be inspired by the State Department have been worse than no accounts. So long as the communiqué that tells the advance of the soldier is less important than that which tells the advance of the politician, the one safe and fair course is for the Department to assume that responsibility ordinarily assumed by the Allied governments, in statements carefully enough considered to merit government authorization. Such a course is safe because it would mark off the government's findings from those that are ascribed to the government in accounts whose meagre information has been twisted into propaganda. It is fair, because it is an elementary assurance that great sacrifices will need be endured only for a clear purpose. There must not be lacking so accurate an account of progress in international politics that the country will have sound ground upon which it may base its opposition to any development of the war, if it does not choose to pay for that development in the lives of its young men.

CHARLES MERZ.

Movie Morals

I SAT by the fire in a friend's room one night not long ago while he was busily clicking off on his typewriter what was to be a movie version of a novel by an indulgent and eminent member of his family. I found myself wishing enviously that I had a relative who spent his time writing novels for me to moveyize. "How easy," I said to myself, "almost like copying the first lines of poems to make an index for an anthology!"

But suddenly my friend stopped. I saw him bend forward anxiously and mull over a few pages of the text. His brow wrinkled. He sat back in his chair muttering his favorite expletive in vicious staccato.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Matter enough! You see," he cried despairingly, "the heroine is seduced!"

The gravity of the situation dawned on me at once. "I never thought of that," I said. "That *is* rather tough."

My friend rose and started that nervous pacing which always accompanied a crisis in cerebration. "Of course it is," he said moodily. "You simply can't have a seduced heroine in a movie. Not if she's going to come out right!"

In that cry of revolt against things as they are my friend, without knowing it, had touched on a fundamental canon in contemporary fiction-making, one of a half dozen or so stock concepts endlessly fecund to our facile romancers, a matrix for our innocent American fiction, "innocent," as Henry James once said, "even of reflection." For this as distinctly applies to the fiction of the magazine as to that of the picture theatre. But since the movie is now our most popular art form such conventionalization crystallizes most flagrantly and most obviously there.

There was recently on view in New York a movie version of The Easiest Way. Besides the distinction of having been forbidden in Boston after one performance, this play may lay claim to being one of the best examples of American drama which our stage has brought forward. The things that were done to The Easiest Way in the movie version exemplify beautifully the movie-goer's peculiar sense of moral values; they show how far-fetched people are when they talk about "Victorianism" as about a thing that is dead. The movie-goer, be it remembered, is the citizen of the country and his wife, the voter present and prospective.

In the play—a study of a pretty, nondescript, weak woman—we have the story of Laura Murdock, a third-rate actress, who becomes the mistress of a rich broker, Willard Brockden, and then falls in love with a young reporter, James Madison, to whom she promises faithfulness while he goes West to "strike it rich." But waiting in New York proves monotonous to Laura and she goes back to Brockden. Brockden, quite honest according to his lights, makes her promise to write to Madison that they have resumed the old relationship. This Laura has not the strength to do; she plays both men false and when they find it out they both desert her. And so she goes, simultaneously, in the language of the play, "to Rector's and to Hell." The play is an honest study of the genre of Pinero's Iris, infinitely more crude, but earnestly and nervously wrought. Brockden, like Maldonado in Iris, is a fine, craggy, outstanding figure.

In the movie Brockden becomes the crassest of melodrama villains, a mere sneak and pander, lying in wait for the until then virginal Laura, closing all avenues of livelihood for her till she is forced to break her promise to Madison. But what is less bearable is that Laura becomes a Magdalen. We are expected to water her with our tears. She is the victim of circumstances, a touching example of "what might have been." And at the end we have a truly enlightening divergence from the orig-

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inal. We see Laura, as in the play, go to Rector's. But shall she be left there, eating expensive foods and drinking rare wines? That, for an audience with a healthy respect for material comfort, would be too decidedly "coming out right." So this is what happens: we accompany Laura to Rector's and see her sit down at a laden table in that alluring refectory. Presently comes a Fat Person in immaculate dress who offers to take her home in his limousine. The indefatigable director takes you inside the limousine and you see the sensitive Laura struggling from the embrace of the amorous Croesus. But he persists and Magdalen jumps out of the moving machine only to jump a moment later into a convenient lake. She is pulled out and taken to the hospital, where the next day Madison finds her. Only when she dies a treacly death in his arms is the audience satisfied. For the wages of sin is not dancing and champagne at Rector's, but inexorably death. It is one of the canons of movie morality that no woman can have relations with a man outside of wedlock without coming, sooner or later, as a direct result of her delinquency, to some dire fate, preferably death.

The morals of the movies are also the morals of the popular magazine. In a recent story by Miss Fanny Hurst, we have the plot of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray followed with a commendable fidelity to the famous original: Paula has become a model in a lingerie firm. She has been the mistress of the proprietor and is now beloved of a middle-aged widower from St. Louis with a daughter by a first wife. For the rest of the story see The Second Mrs. Tanqueray; the quondam model doesn't come out right any more than does Paula and for the precise reason. This, by the way, is not the first tribute paid to Mr. Pinero's play by an American short-story writer. I remember reading some years ago a Gouverneur Morris variation, entitled You Can't Get Away With It, in which the heroine doesn't and for a similar reason. And The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, be it noted, went over into the movies with scarcely any change save of course the inevitable idealization of the heroine.

The cause of the popularity of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray with American fiction and scenario-writers is not far to seek. Paula gets what's coming to her; she emphatically doesn't come out right. You don't see Mrs. Warren's Profession in the magazines. Nor do you see it in the movies. Mrs. Warren's punishment is not of the sort to satisfy the Puritan brutality of the movie moralist. It would not seem to him punishment. If Mrs. Warren is ever lifted to celluloidal immortality it will be shown that her "ventures" are complete failures; there will be a "close-up" of an expert accountant's report showing the abysmal shortage in her exchequer. Then there will be a great caption: "Bankrupt!" and a picture of Mrs. Warren, already attentuated by starvation, weeping and unhappy. That sort of punishment an audience of money-worshippers will be able to understand.

Since the movie moralist knows no alternatives for his protagonists other than death or beatitude it follows that his characters must be drawn in blacks and whites—to comport with an elementary logic they must be saints or devils. Otherwise they will not merit the fates in store for them. So vanishes from the films all nuance, all complexity, all delineation. To an audience still in the Nick Carter stage of literary appreciation this is vastly agreeable. Movie-goers want their characters stark, unmodified, villainy and heroism undiluted. What happened to Brockden in The Easiest Way happens always. Paid in Full, an earlier play of Mr. Walter's, is rememberable for Capt. Williams, a characterization as salient as that of Brockden. In the movie the whole emphasis of the story was shifted to make of Williams a debauched and lecherous scoundrel. The same thing happens to the husband in Echegaray's Gossip, a variant of which I saw recently.

The "unhappy" ending serves the movie men well in another direction also. It justifies all sorts of licentiousness in the body of the story. The movies are endlessly preoccupied with sex. Even Peer Gynt became in the movies—to quote the producer—"a series of love-episodes with five different types of the world's most beautiful women." One of the five different types turned out to be quite surprisingly an agent of the secret service on Peer's trail for slaving! Anitra, whom Peer describes as angular and dirty was, I remember, as immaculate as Phoebe Snow and as plump as a Winter Garden show-girl. Such maudlinizing of life and of art is the more to be regretted as it stunts the development of a medium that might otherwise be finely expressive.

S. N. Behrman.

Trivia

Social Success

THE servant gave me my coat and hat, and in a glow of self-satisfaction I walked out into the night. "A delightful evening," I reflected, "the nicest kind of people. What I said about finance and French philosophy impressed them; and how they laughed when I imitated a pig squealing."

But soon after, "God, it's awful," I muttered. "I wish I were dead."

L. Pearsall Smith.

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The Gentleman from North Dakota

JOHN M. BAER, most recent of political curiosities, representing the First Congressional District of North Dakota and representing also the farmers' Nonpartisan League, arrives in Washington with his mental baggage liberally plastered for him en route with such engaging labels of identification and of welcome as "anti-American" and "pro-German" and "traitor"; and he is brought to dine and to be himself dissected at the Press Club; and he holds crowded levees in his new office in the House Building; and at last, from his very complete personal and documentary account of himself and of his constituents, two facts emerge.

First. The words "anti-American" and "pro-German" and "traitor" are highly inaccurate and highly misleading clues to Mr. Baer's and his constituents' actual state of mind.

Second. That state of mind is nevertheless an alarming and therefore a profitable study to all citizens who wish this country to remain firm for the war till a true useful international end is reached.

Mr. Baer happens to be, by temperament, a peculiarly faithful funnel of public sentiment. He will tell you with elation that while he was in New York on his way to Washington he "interviewed" one hundred and fifty-three (153) people on the war and on the cost of living and that he has their answers all sorted and classified. He is immensely and delightfully "sociable." He has slow eyes, oddly slow and steady and inquiring, with heavy eyelids which seem to capture and close down on what he is learning. He learns almost entirely from people, and he has a quality which often appears in a man of that type: he is charmingly naïve in the receptive film which he unrolls to the world and then stonily shrewd in the conclusions to which he comes. In short, he is just exactly like his own cartoons. He is precisely as ingenuous in manner and precisely as pointed in purpose as those homely driving pictures with which he so remarkably divined the public sentiment of North Dakota and so powerfully helped to consolidate it.

He was a postmaster in North Dakota for awhile, by invitation of Mr. Wilson, but he could not cease to be a cartoonist, an interpretative cartoonist; and his contributions to politics continued to be principally his portraits of ideas, his photographic portraits of locally dominant ideas, done in his capacity of natural official court jester to the Nonpartisan League. In that capacity, when delegates of the League met to pick a candidate for Congress, he felt it to be his duty to amuse them with an illustrated talk. He prepared it. It was very humorous. It showed what a grand Congressman a cartoonist would make. It was manifestly very humorous. He took it down to the convention hall and delivered it. To his chagrin it turned out to be, as humor, a disastrous flivver. The applause with which it was greeted was an applause of a profound and perfect seriousness. In his absence he had been himself named to be the candidate.

His cartoons in the Nonpartisan Leader and elsewhere had not really been journalistic cartoons at all. They had been folk cartoons.

Mr. Baer happens further to be an American. His first ancestor in America landed in 1742. Mr. Baer, though, does not say: "He landed in 1742." He says: "He bought his land in 1742." Mr. Baer is an American of the soil. He was born at Black Creek, Wisconsin, on a farm. In his youth he was offered a job back east by his ancient relative, George F. Baer—Divine Right Baer—to whom it will be remembered that God, quite unwarned by the consequences of having committed the little Mark of Brandenburg to the Hohenzollerns, committed the Reading Railroad "in trust," thus putting all nearby railroads on their guard. This job young John M. Baer refused. It would have meant going eastward instead of westward; and, besides, George F. Baer was not really in the right line of the Baers in America. The right line is the John M. Baers. There have been seven of them, father to son. One fought in the Revolutionary War, one in the Mexican War, one in the war between the States. The present, the seventh, John M. Baer, Congressman Baer, would now be in the uniform of the Navy if he had not been debarred by a defect rather humiliating to a cartoonist—bad eyes. His brother enlisted in the war against Spain and died of a disease brought on (so his family believes) by embalmed beef and other patriotic offerings made to that war by the character who appears fatly and blackly in Congressman Baer's cartoons as "Big Biz." It is an American family, rather clearly.

Going westward, young John M. Baer came to North Dakota and in time got a farm. It now has 2,000 acres. Mr. Baer admits that 2,000 acres is a large number of acres. He asserts, however, and he asserts it with great vehemence, that when he has taken in his money for his crops and when he has paid out his money for his labor and his machinery and his taxes and his interest on his mortgage he is no better off on the thirty-first of December than he was on the previous first of

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January. Right there begins his view of the war.

He and his fellow-farmers have only an annex of their mind to give to the war. The main body of it is filled to overflowing already with their bitter fight against "Big Biz." Their enthusiasm for a foreign war, as is bound to be the case with every class of people who feel themselves genuinely exploited, is quite eclipsed really by their enthusiasm for their own private domestic war against their exploiters.

The details of their exploitation, details personal, details statistical, are forever at their tongue-tips. The reports of the North Dakota State Agricultural College, Mr. Baer will tell you instantly, have proved that through false and tricky "grading" and "dockage" of wheat, done by "Big Biz" in purchasing wheat and in re-selling it, the farmers of North Dakota every year lose $115,000,000. Now there are just about 60,000 farmers in North Dakota. Therefore each North Dakota farmer loses, on the average, $1,900 in this one way alone. He wants that $1,900. It is not $1,900 of new money, owned by nobody, open to be got by anybody who can get it. It is $1,900 of old money, owned by him, the farmer, and stolen from him and from his wife and from his children, as he sees it, ruthlessly, frightfully, autocratically, and—to put the final anti-foreign-war touch on it—under public governmental auspices.

The rules of the market, in "grading," for instance, are operated under authority of law; and so are the rules, for another instance, that govern the maximum interest charges on mortgages. These rules depend on statutes and on constitutions and on interpretations of statutes and of constitutions. They have been made, in historic fact, as the Nonpartisan League maintains, by the Grain Speculator and the Banker and the Flour Miller. These men, who are part of "Big Biz," who are part of that very same "Big Biz" that everywhere joins the National Security League and pines for armies and for a pro-Ally war and for justice in Serbia, have been the legislating class, the ruling class, the class directly or indirectly the Government, and they have governed to enrich themselves and to exploit the farmer by deliberate legal thieving governmental processes.

This identification of Government with exploitation necessarily weights every policy of Government and every policy of "Big Biz" with a heavy suspicion. Most especially does it so weight a policy of war and of conscription and of foreign fighting—things highly uncomfortable. If there were no counter-weight, the state of mind resulting would be simple. But a counter-weight exists. It is a plain, simple, sincere patriotism, a patriotism apparently inexplicable to some of our eastern urban critics, a patriotism that produces more volunteers in many a "pro-German" western hamlet than in many an equal group of "sound" citizens in an eastern city district, a patriotism of the soil, of people who have "bought their land," who, however exploited in the market, still tread their own America.

Mr. Baer, one feels sure, was no ardent advocate of this war. If he could have had his way, one may reasonably suspect that we would not be in it now. But he did not attack it in his campaign. His patriotism is of a quality that might seem astonishingly complete to a man like David Lloyd George, who could and did attack one of his country's wars while it was in progress, or to a man like Charles James Fox who was carried to Westminster Abbey after having risen in the House of Commons during the Revolutionary War to say, "It would have been a most fortunate circumstance for England if the noble lord in the blue ribbon had been asleep on the day when he planned this accursed war with America," and after having also risen, during the war with France, to inform the House that he quite agreed with Cicero's "Iniquissimam pacem justissimo bello antefero."

If Mr. Baer should ever call any war of the United States an "accursed" war, he would have a fit of shudders; and if he should ever rise in the House of Representatives during any war to say that Cicero was right in advising us to embrace the most oppressive peace treaties conceivable rather than continue the justest hostilities, he would most certainly never get buried by his fellow citizens in any North Dakota equivalent of Westminster Abbey. Mr. Bryan's willingness to serve in this war after having told numerous audiences that all war is a direct and sinful violation of God's explicit commandment against murder is simply a personally grotesque proof of the patriotically pliant quality of even the extreme Bryantic type of American agricultural pacifism. It yields, even that type of it, to a war, instantly, *till the war can be stopped.*

Mr. Baer, by no means an extremist, yielded to this war without a struggle, in his campaign for Congress. He accepted it. It was not his issue, but he accepted it. His issue was the deliverance of the farmer by law from oppressions practiced upon him by law. The war, he would say, is no issue at all. Americanism is no issue at all. Patriotism is no issue at all. "I assume," he would say, "that everybody is patriotic at this time." We are in the war. Being in it, well—we are in it. What is there to say? And he would draw a picture of Uncle Sam getting tangled into the war, and he would then drape him triumphantly in the Stars and Stripes, and the answer was sufficient, and he was elected by a clear majority over all his rivals,

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Democratic and Republican and other, combined.

To call this state of mind " pro-Germanism " is not only wrong but ruinous. It is a diagnosis which misses the malady and so misses the cure.

The malady is precisely that Mr. Baer's support of the war depends on patriotism. " Patriotism is not enough." When Miss Cavell, about to depart this life in the loftiest patriotism, giving to England freely a dust that England bore, said " Patriotism is not enough," she said a thing touching not only her own soul but the soul of all this world in all this war. It is a war transcending patriotism. It transcends it by going beyond and above it to a new coöperation between nation and nation for purposes of international self-submission and justice. It transcends it by going beyond and below it to a new coöperation between man and man for purposes of industrial self-submission and justice. It makes Henderson a pivotal political figure in England, Thomas in France, Kerensky in Russia. It makes the genuine destruction of the military autocracy of Germany possible only, possible *only,* through a rising toward industrial democracy, toward ultimate human freedom, in England and in France and in Russia and in the United States. Imperialistic factions, factions only national, factions only patriotic, may be perfectly willing at any favorable opportunity to make separate peaces with Germany if only their imperialistic aims and their sentiments of national patriotic " honor " are satisfied by some concessions of territory or by some curtailments of submarining ruthlessness. The people who can never consent to a separate peace with Germany until a true useful international end is reached are the people who plainly see in their Government's operative policies at home and in their Government's declared purposes abroad a definite and compelling advance toward a human life democratically just and democratically secure.

Mr. Baer in his campaign spoke of conscription. He did not attack it. But if life is conscripted, said he, naturally, wealth must be conscripted, too. Arriving in Washington, he denied that his people were " slackers," as, indeed, they are not. But—(another " but ")—the Government must protect them against prices artificially flattened on what they sell and artificially inflated on what they buy. Mr. Baer was endorsed by the North Dakota State Federation of Labor. Wages, along with prices and along with taxes, must receive from the Government an attention enormously greater than they are receiving now for their control toward an adjustment convincingly democratic. The control of militarism and the control of that excess of capitalistic power which is commonly called " plutocracy " are not two different things. They are the same thing. And the people, in their hearts, know it, even if dumbly. They will follow only a distinctly anti-" plutocratic " government to a conclusive anti-militaristic finish.

As for our declared purposes abroad, their first necessary quality is that they should be declared with a much greater volume of authority than at present. It is no exaggeration to say that the discussions of the war in the Senate and in the House and in the State Department convey little light to persons not already enlightened. For such persons, and they are exceedingly numerous, Mr. LaFollette's resolution has been answered in a manner stuffed out with unsatisfying generalities and most scantily provided with assurances of a sort that are specific and can be visualized. This is for a reason not unconnected with Mr. Wilson's loneliness. It is all very well for him to go up into Mount Sinai and stay there. He almost always returns with a tablet most suitably and appealingly and authoritatively engraved. He must surely remember, though, that when Moses stayed there too long and left an Aaron insufficiently inspired behind him, the people were tempted to set up a golden calf. Is it not possible for Mr. Wilson to provide himself, in the Senate and in the House and in the State Department, with men who have been permitted to share his illumination sufficiently to be able to impart it continuously and effectively to the public?

Policies clearly and intelligibly directed against " plutocratic " exploitation at home, purposes clearly and intelligibly directed against militaristic exploitation throughout the world—these are the necessary supplements to patriotism for the waging of this war on all fronts solidly and uninterruptedly to a complete fruitful issue.

WILLIAM HARD.

CORRESPONDENCE

An Appraisal of War Purposes

SIR: In the admirable article on The Future of Pacifism in The New Republic for July 28th, Professor Dewey invites a word in regard to the past. He says: " The pacifist literature of the months preceding our entrance into the war was opportunistic, breathlessly, frantically so." That is fairly true, but it couldn't be helped. Pacifists had two things in mind: the line of least resistance in stormy times always leads straight to war; no contrary policy could succeed unless the President himself accepted it as his own. For that reason nothing could be done with Professor Carlton Hay's suggestion of a League of Neutrals against lawless aggression of belligerents, nor with Professor Hull's plan of a Joint High Commission, nor with suggestions of stipulations as to British aims.

Moreover the action of Congress was purely negative, and no concrete, positive aim has been made public since. Again the line of least resistance. There are no signs of playing " any vitally energetic role," except in a military way. There were many among us who had figured that

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our " inevitable entrance into the European system " might be on our own terms of conciliation, coöperation and justice—not merely as a belated partner in a struggle of attrition. Professor Dewey insists that " if the genuine pacifism of our country, a pacifism interested in permanent results . . . had had leadership . . . it is not likely that we should have entered the war without stipulations." True enough, but how could leadership have been achieved? Only the President himself could stipulate. He seemed pledged to the policy of " peace without victory," and no one could move him further. Moreover to have asked for stipulations would have discredited the statement that " war is forced upon us." Being in the war because we could not help it does not logically entitle us to revise the secret treaties of the great Powers of Europe.

If we did right in entering the war we must show some noble purpose. It was not to " crush Germany " nor to force democratic forms on an unwilling people quite competent to resist, nor to preserve our quasi-allies from impending bankruptcy, nor even to save Belgium and France. We may possibly hope to disrupt the whole system of cutthroat diplomacy, of armed rivalry, of economic " war after war," and before; and their abuses of unchecked nationalism which culminated in the theory and practice of Pan-Germanism.

We cannot ask our people to fight to restore an old political status, because it was old, nor to create new ones just as bad, nor to draw new maps to shelter new aggressions, nor to secure commercial advantages to any one. Our purposes await no military decision, for the only matter of importance in any war is the terms of peace, and the most that we hope for must depend on the acts of the exhausted populations when they meet in peace to count their losses.

And, whatever the results attained—how terrible the loss! When the old men who have made the war and the peace have passed away, for a century to follow, we shall deal with an emasculated continent. For with " the slain unnumbered," the men who might have been but are not, the future of Europe should have lain.

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

Stanford University, California.

Evidence of Socialist Gain

SIR: In your leading editorial of August 11th, after quoting the London correspondent of the New York Tribune to the effect that " in every belligerent country the Socialists are gaining tremendously in power," you say: " The statement would not be true of the United States, in which alone the Socialist party has condemned the participation of its own country in the war," etc.

The accuracy of your opinion can be tested by hard facts.

In the first week of April there was a municipal election in Chicago. One of the Socialist aldermen stood for reëlection, the other having still a year to serve. Kennedy was attacked by both old parties and by every daily paper on the ground of the alleged unpatriotic stand of the Socialist party. He was reëlected by the largest plurality ever given any candidate in that ward; and at the same time a third Socialist alderman was elected.

On August 14th a municipal primary election was held in Dayton, Ohio. The campaign was fought wholly on war issues, and the local Socialists strongly upheld the position taken by the national party organization. The three Socialist candidates came out at the head of the poll, with votes ranging from 8,900 to 11,000, while the six old-party candidates got from 7,300 down to less than 600 votes.

The dues-paying membership of the Socialist party organization has increased from 67,000 in April to 90,000 in July; and every Socialist party paper, except those suppressed by the government, reports an increase of from 25 per cent to 100 per cent or more in its circulation.

These facts hardly bear out your view that the Socialist party of the United States has " degenerated into a sect " and has become " hopelessly divided from the radical and working-class movement in this country." Nor is this view supported by the rapid and solid growth of the People's Council, of which the Socialist party is a component part.

Your statement that the Socialist party of America is the only one that has opposed the entrance of its own country into the war is equally incorrect. In Russia, Italy, and Rumania, the Socialist parties almost unanimously (that is, with the exception in each case of a handful of individual " intellectuals " so called) took an essentially similar position. So did the great bulk of the British Socialist party and the Independent Labor party, as well as a vigorous and growing minority of the German and the Austrian Socialists.

ALGERNON LEE.

New York City.

Diplomacy in the Far East

SIR: Your two articles of June 23rd gave us generously of your editorial views on the situation in the Far East. That situation is just now so delicate and so crucial to this country, notwithstanding our apparent concentration in the Atlantic, that I am impelled to criticize before we pass into the new set of problems to be posed by the Ishii mission what I believe to be not merely your extraordinarily Tory slant, but your persistently prejudiced analysis of American Pacific policy.

In those two articles, Bull in the China Shop and Bad Impressions, the crux of the reactionary spirit to which I refer appears in this sentence: " The abrupt dismissal of the American banking group, and the condemnation of the policy which had been developed through years of difficult negotiation with the Powers most interested in the Orient, afforded these Powers an excuse for excluding Americans from their councils."

You lament this dismissal, you deplore this condemnation; and you profess to believe that the Administration policy which dictated it is " founded on ignorance." Now, sir (as they say in the London Times), this is a very surprising kind of Toryism to find in your columns. You might at least take the pains to state that it was in effect a banking monopoly that the so-called American group in 1913 proposed, and still desires, to join on our behalf in China. Secondly, it is worth noting that the establishment of that monopoly was opposed by all the constitutional forces in the Chinese government, and by all the impetus that public opinion then had in the life of the Chinese nation. Thirdly, you might acknowledge that President Wilson's dismissal of that group from public recognition has not since been countermanded by American public opinion and still stands as an integral part of recognized American Pacific policy. That public opinion, like the American government's policy, may to your mind be " founded on ignorance." Perhaps it isn't, as you apparently mean, founded exclusively on the technique of the international financier. Yet it stands, as our Mexican policy stands, on amateur statesmanship, but on broad grounds of public right, and on comprehension of the rights of other

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peoples to free government that the world's adepts in Imperialism have yet to learn. This may be benevolent stupidity; it may be Yankee far-sightedness: but it is inevitable Americanism. And to disparage it as you do in relation to China is to ignore, at the behest of a few specialists, the whole color of this country's mind.

Again, on the specific question of whether or not China can be "saved" by international bankers, I am sure the rejoinder will carry weight with your readers that all there is of conscious national spirit in China is resolved that the nation shall not be saved that way. They know that cynical finance-diplomacy in 1913 had decided to foreclose on the Chinese people as a lapsed mortgage. They know that the rehabilitation of the salt tax under foreign supervision (one of the reasons why China is solvent to-day) was part of a greater scheme which, in President Wilson's words, "touched very nearly the administrative independence" of the nation.

That emergency has been lifted from China with the typhoon of the war. Thrown on her own resources, China has not, as she was doing in 1913, continued toward bankruptcy, but has had for the first time since her contact with foreign finance a protracted period of financial solvency. Not merely the salt tax, but the land tax, the tax collections from the provinces, the volume of foreign trade, the proceeds from the government railroads, telegraphs and postal services (which last touches its record of a million pieces this year) have all been bigger, better administered, and more soundly regarded by foreign critics during this period than ever before in China's history. It is most disheartening to find you ignoring this real progress, while the Administration which you support acknowledges it and shapes its policy toward giving it fair play in a none too friendly world.

In closing, may I ask your pardon that my rustication in these distant parts has prevented my rejoinder from coming sooner to your hands? Our sight in the Far East these days is a long sight, however, and I wait your answer in the sure confidence that the issue will remain warm.

GARDNER L. HARDING.

Chatham, Massachusetts.

A Task for Pacifists

SIR: I venture to say that the article by Professor John Dewey entitled The Future of Pacifism, in your issue of July 28th, is one of the most important contributions to that practical philosophy which a democracy at war must evolve for itself if it is to continue a democracy or continue at war. I wish that, for emphasis, I could quote the paragraph in which Professor Dewey speaks of the futility of directing effort "to stopping the war rather than to determine the terms upon which it shall be stopped." Fortunately, the most authoritative voices among recognized pacifists have condemned this futility, for example, Rabbi Magnes in his president's address at the Conference for Democracy and Terms of Peace, at New York, May 30, and the chief effort of the leading pacifist bodies has been in exactly the direction which Professor Dewey advises, *viz.*, to bring about an early consideration and formulation of terms of peace. There is one matter, however, in regard to which the pacifists show a wholly natural disposition to repeat what Professor Dewey notes as their earlier error, to substitute destructive and critical, for constructive activity. That is the draft.

The draft is a fact. There are three ways in which it might conceivably cease to be a fact. One is by a decision of the Supreme Court that the purpose for which it exists—the despatch of an army abroad—is unconstitutional. Now it might be wise for the government, in order to settle all question, to test the constitutionality of this war measure in the courts; but for citizens to do so, however obnoxious the fact is to them personally, is a waste of time and effort. Does any one for a moment suppose that with the regular army and the national guard in France the court would interpose a constitutional objection to reinforcing them? The answer is to be read in the decisions of the Supreme Court upon cases involving national sovereignty and control since the Spanish War. The judges of the court were human beings before they were lawyers. They presumably have studied their American history, and remember the associations established in school-days between the names of Roger B. Taney and Simon Legree. Moreover, there is a special reason why pacifists should not betake themselves to the judicial chamber on this issue, since they are largely of that enlightened class of people who speak of the constitution with their tongues in their cheeks.

The second way in which the draft might cease to be a fact is by repeal in Congress. It is true that political capital may still be wrung out of the situation by attacking the draft in Congress, but again nobody dreams that it will be repealed by the present body. If the war goes on through 1918 the issue might play a part in the election of its successor, but if the war goes on the whole question whether the country wants war or peace will be raised, and those who favor peace will hardly fight the campaign on a detail; they will hardly advocate disarmament before the obvious necessity for armament is removed by negotiation.

The third method is to reduce the effect of the draft by local obstruction, by emphasizing the inevitable inequalities of its operation, by breaking down confidence in the good faith of those administering it, by increasing individual objection of all sorts. Now, it will hardly be argued seriously that such guerilla warfare will be, in any large way, successful. Moreover, this method tends to cast doubt on the pacifist attitude as a whole and particularly in one point. The case of the conscientious objectors is largely in pacifist hands. Undoubtedly the treatment of this class in England is the chapter which, after the war, England would most gladly blot out of the record. The accounts given in the Atlantic Monthly of November, 1916, of the childish cruelty with which these persons were treated, from the grotesque questioning of judges to mob law or military executions, are what we expect of the authorities of state prisons, or attendants in asylums for the insane. Already we have in America the beginnings of such things in the speeches and actions of certain judges and recruiting squads. The problem of the conscientious objector in America, it should further be noted, is complicated by our foreign population, and the immense varieties of racial and personal psychology which it presents. It is a somewhat delicate task to elucidate the conscientious processes of the Anglo-Saxon; it is beyond measure so with the Lithuanian or the Armenian. In short, the problem calls for the utmost tact of those to whose authority the final decision is committed, aided by all the intelligence of sympathizers and well-wishers that can be brought to bear.

It is just here that pacifists will fail to render a peculiarly necessary, human, and patriotic service if they put themselves out of court, as it were, by allowing doubt to gather in regard to their ulterior motives. We cannot question that the intention of the administration is to avoid the extreme form of compulsory service. President Wilson has described the draft, as "in no sense a conscription of the

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unwilling; it is rather selection from a nation which has volunteered in mass." Even discounting the President's almost exuberant felicity, the root of the matter is there—the ideal of the happy democracy at war—what every nation in arms would choose to be. The President himself has given us the right to expect that selection will not rest entirely on physical capacity to bear arms. To carry the process of selection into the more difficult realm of moral and social sanctions, he will need the help of other minds than those of General Crowder and Judge Landis. He will need the help of those who have studied the situation as pacifists. Surely they will not disqualify themselves practically for such service.

But it must be repeated that they can be of use to the drafted only by renouncing the right to attack the draft. The line may be a delicate one to draw, but clearly the way to aid the conscientious objector is not to proselyte. It is enough to suggest the warning that he who makes two conscientious objectors grow where one grew before is in danger of producing two unwilling men-at-arms. The blessings of conscientious objection are not

"a good diffused
And in diffusion even more intense."

And, on the other hand, the pacifist of military age who, in spite of doubts as to the necessity and the glory of this or of any war, in spite of invitation at the unconvincing platitudes in which its objects have been defined, in spite of disgust at the mixture of brutality and sentimentality evinced in its advocacy by the organs of public opinion, nevertheless sacrifices his welfare, and his life, and, as it may seem to him, his conscience in this quarrel, may have the satisfaction of knowing that he has made it easier for a comrade somewhere to escape a like fate—and surely it is true of the moral life, if not of the physical, that he that loseth it in such a cause shall find it.

ROBERT MORSE LOVETT.

Chicago, Illinois.

One Group of Vigilantes

SIR: If a sojourner such as I am has to justify himself for making a criticism of an American movement he might do so according to the Irish saying "The man on the fence sees most of the game." And if the man on the fence sees a misplay why should he not cry it out?—especially when he knows that the players are fundamentally fair-minded and fundamentally tolerant men.

One learns from many newspaper articles that the intellectuals of America have organized themselves as "The Vigilantes." I have always thought that the intellectuals of a country should not organize themselves at all, for their best aid to their country is the personal criticism and suggestion that comes from free and liberal minds. Anyone who has a like belief will have had it strengthened by the record the American intellectuals have made for themselves since they became organized. They seem to have said to themselves "The mob-mind does not exist in America: Come, let us create it." If one wants to find anything more crude and uninformed than the article in the commonest newspaper one has to look at the pronunciamentos of "The Vigilantes."

This war is a conflict of civilizations, and one must feel that the finer civilization is bound to win out. But do "The Vigilantes" feel that? In their effort to create a mob-mind they make an unfavorable exhibit of American civilization. They are prepared to go even below the task of reinforcing the uninformed publicists. They are to take up, it appears, the duties of the Tzar's and the Irish Chief Secretary's police. They are to stand at street-corners and make notes of what street-orators and people at the outskirts of crowds say. This, in Ireland, is called "Felon-setting." Imagine men with intellectual responsibilities undertaking such a job! It seems too gross and fantastic. It would be unbelievable in Europe. Indeed I have had to read the newspaper twice before I was convinced that the peers of Whitman and Thoreau had thought of such a prostitution. Yet here is the miserable record:

> "The Vigilantes issued an appeal for three kinds of volunteers. First are wanted those who will pledge themselves against treason or disloyalty when they come upon it accidentally, and speak out against treason no matter who utters it. Second are wanted persons to search for disloyalty to operate as a New York street patrol. These persons will arrest speakers for the following: Insults to the President of the United States, advocacy of America not sending soldiers to Europe, urging Americans to avoid military service, remarks that cast dishonor upon national heroes, attacks upon allies of the country. The Vigilantes organization will prosecute these cases."

Intellectuals of America, your noblesse obliges you to do something different. And I know of no one who has better counseled what free men (and who are free if not the intellectuals of a country?) should do in times of mass-pressure of opinion than your own Henry Thoreau.

PADRAIC COLUM.

New York City.

Believes Negotiation Unthinkable

SIR: You say of Pope Benedict's peace initiative that, "If the Allied governments refuse to negotiate on the basis of such a promising proposal, the inevitable result of the refusal would be to strengthen the German morale and to weaken that of France, Great Britain, and the United States." Though you say this with great positiveness, you are probably aware that it is pure conjecture; and it seems to me to be just as good a guess that a peace negotiation on some such basis as that suggested by the Pope is now an essential condition of maintaining German morale intact. As to the negotiations themselves, Germany could probably be depended upon to hold her own in them were the war resolution of the Entente once weakened by an expectation of early peace.

But that is not the only objection to the Pope's proposal, nor the principal one. This is that the first preliminary of the negotiation it urges is the condonation of all of Germany's outrages upon law and humanity. To the American people, who were forced into the war by these outrages, such a negotiation must at present seem unthinkable.

EDWARD S. CORWIN.

Princeton, New Jersey.

Minority Report on Taxation

SIR: The information, startling, indeed, to many of us, contained in the Senate Finance Committee's minority report, has been, by most metropolitan newspapers, artfully condensed and hidden in an obscure inside column. If these figures were generally known, they certainly would completely change the public's attitude toward war taxation. How can they be brought out and driven into the consciousness of the average, docile, newspaper-driven citizen?

CHARLTON ELLIS.

New York City.

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At the Capitol

"Anarchists and Traitors in Congress"

THOUGH there have at all times during the present session been congressmen who, having their own minds made up, voluntarily or involuntarily, were ready to impute a lack of patriotism to those not so ready to vote, the past week has brought the first definite charges of a coalition in Congress to block the prosecution of the war. Mr. Chamberlain, in a position of responsibility, has declared that within the Senate there exists a group "continually consorting, conspiring and treating with the enemies of the United States." In the other house Mr. Heflin has attacked directly two of his Western colleagues, and coupled their names with the words "anarchists and traitors." The resolution introduced by Mr. LaFollette, placing Congress behind an immediate peace on a no annexations, no indemnities basis, has given a final impetus to the development of the situation. As a result of the publicity that it has everywhere attracted, there has been established a very widely-held opinion that a bloc of pacifists in Congress—LaFollette, Vardaman, Hardwick, Mason, Britten and others of a sympathetic mould—are actively united in opposition to the measures necessary for the winning of the war.

To discover that there has been a group of members of the two houses ready to oppose with any weapon the recent measures of the administration does not require the penetration that some editorial comment implies. It requires only enough fortitude to visit the galleries, almost any day, and listen to an anti-war member expressing his opposition, not stealthily, but at the top of his lungs. The trouble with this growing belief in the existence of an obstructionist group is not that it is so far wrong in fact, but that it encourages a different sort of misunderstanding. At the present moment resentment of certain delays on the part of Congress in expediting war legislation is running high. But the responsibility for every delay is beginning to be put exclusively on the obstructionist group. Obsolete machinery and inherited political makeshifts are catching none of it. No development could give more satisfaction to the average district-minded congressman, whose reliance upon public indifference to faults in organization is a much more fundamental source of delay. So seldom is there any real resentment of the activities of Congress that it is unfortunate for it to be directed against subordinate evils. And, as contributors to delay, the small group of active anti-war members have decidedly been subordinates.

For with the exception of Senator Reed's long-winded attack on the food-control bill, the anti-war members have been outdone by the whole obstructionist machinery which grinds out the country's legislation. Where an unwilling member has been able to hold up one war measure or another for a day, certain practices of the system itself—practices which owe their success to public indifference—have been able to hold it up for a week. Almost every war measure offers an instance. When the Conscription bill was brought into the Senate after the House had passed it there was indignation expressed in many editorial opinions because Mr. LaFollette delayed the measure by a renewed effort to tack on amendments. Yet when the bill reached the conference stage it was delayed—not for one day, but for eighteen days—because of the well established practice of writing entirely new provisions into a bill, in conference. The three-billion-dollar War Appropriations bill lay in conference for twenty-four days; the Sundry Civil bill, fifty-eight; the Food Survey bill, sixty-seven. Compared with this sort of delay, in bills where delay has been more or less serious, any efforts of the individual obstructionist are almost negligible. Dangerous to the morale of the country the obstructionist may be, but as a factor in producing delay he is not half so successful as the majority he is apparently contesting.

It would be possible to study the record of the present session, and reach the conclusion that for each unit of delay caused by anti-war members there have been nine units of delay due to the inefficient instruments with which Congress works: to the division of powers that is also a division of responsibilities; to the committee action which has never had the light of publicity, and might excite no public interest, even if it had; to the inept leadership of chairmen chosen not at all for their qualifications but because they are the oldest surviving members of their respective committees. A bill is sent to the Capitol by a Cabinet member who need assume no recognized responsibility for it; received by a Committee whose action is likely to be decisive, and upon whose deliberations there is enforced secrecy; debated by a house convinced that the Committee's decision will prevail, and therefore chiefly concerned with impressing its willing constituencies by speeches made for home consumption; and agreed to in a Conference that regularly relies upon its unauthorized prerogative of over-ruling either or both houses with impunity. With a system so constituted, the individual obstructionist is ordinarily a small factor. It is almost literally true that the best way to delay legislation in Congress is to permit it to take its natural course uninterruptedly.

Nor is it in any way coming to the defense of the obstructionist members to assert that in even the small measure of delay that has been due to tactics on the floor they have been less effective than many members vigorously pro-war. Mr. Vardaman, it is true, has taken up time in an assault on the Conscription bill, after it became a law, but Mr. Townsend, of whose patriotism no newspaper has so far had reason for suspicion, has taken up time in an assault on the Navy Department for its failure to settle the wooden-ship controversy—and then admitted, several days later, that he "was thinking at the time that the Shipping Board was under the control of the Navy Department." Other members, not at all opposed to the war, have consumed days in what the Speaker of the House has described as "miscellaneous and promiscuous talk, delivering the same speeches that have been made here to my certain knowledge a hundred times." Take, for instance, Mr. Rubey—striving not to delay the Food-Control Bill with obstructive tactics, but to rush its passage—and yet beginning his speech of approval in this fashion: "Mr. Chairman, I want to say before I begin, that I prepared this speech last week, and I fear that probably everything I am going to say to you has already been stated, but that is not my fault. . . ."

Probably a good measure of the present indignation over delay in war legislation—and the group held to be chiefly responsible for it—is a result of that habit of thinking, so popular now, of confusing mere speed with actual accomplishment. But to charge the anti-war group in Congress with the full responsibility for all delays will have one certain and unfortunate result. It will leave little attention for the factors chiefly responsible: the irresponsible committee and conference systems, the seniority leadership, and the megaphonic debate on the basis of which the country has for years been willing to reëlect its senators and representatives. For the moment, with war measures pending, there is interest in the affairs of Congress. There will be an opportunity lost if that interest is led away from what it might accomplish, and centered upon a few individual members.

C. M.

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The Sincerity of Robert Frost

MOUNTAIN Interval, Robert Frost's recent volume, like the two which preceded it, manifests as its fundamental and embracing quality, sincerity—sincerity in perception, sincerity in thought, sincerity in feeling and sincerity in expression. Mr. Frost believes that "A poet must lean hard on facts, so hard, sometimes, that they hurt." And it is because he has that belief that after reading one of his poems the reader feels that he has had an actual experience. *Leaning* hard on things not only presses them in; it prints them with distinct outline, and makes the salient nubs sink deep. Consequently a poet who leans, so, on experience is able to present segments of life as it is, with every essential detail in just relief. The segments of life in the poems of Mr. Frost all existed first as experiences; none were conceived at the desk. And in so far as setting is concerned they are parochial. Those in North of Boston may be said to have *happened* north of Boston. And, as the new title suggests, these last poems belong to an even more restricted region. The territorial limitation is set because Mr. Frost believes that a poet must utter not what he conjectures but only what he knows.

In the region he knows he has seen much both of nature and of men and women. Like a true lover he is sincere with nature; he never pretends to see what isn't there, but he sees everything, and reveals fresh charms. He doesn't heighten the charms. "We love the things we love for what they are," he says, and we believe him when we read passages like the following from Birches, which I cite to illustrate the marvelous effectiveness of his sincerity in nature description.

Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.

The vividness of that description is secured partly by the sedulous avoidance of pretty words the connotation of which use has dulled. There is not a word in it that fails to elicit attention. And throughout Mr. Frost's poems there prevails the same verbal sincerity.

The extract I have given displays another, and a still more unique aspect of Mr. Frost's veracity. Read aloud, it shows, sentence by sentence, a startling reproduction of the sounds of speech. The author of Mountain Interval has discerned that gesture and inflection are not the only means in conversation of registering subtleties of feeling and shades of meaning supplementary to the sense of the words. The order of the words in the sentence gives to the whole speech unit a meaning tone. And these sound patterns are things of beauty; writing is alive when it takes those shapes which suggest sentence tones. I may be pardoned for singling out a few specimen sentences in which vital character significance inheres in the tone which the sentence form evokes.

From The Bonfire:

Oh, let's go up the hill and scare ourselves,
As reckless as the best of them to-night
By setting fire to all the brush we piled
With pitchy hands to wait for rain or snow.
Oh, let's *not wait for rain to make it safe*

and

Oh, but war's not for children—it's for men.

From The Vanishing Red:

Oh, yes, he showed John the wheel pit all right.

From Snow:

I could, but what's the sense? The rest won't be
So bad.

and again

Oh, yes you do
You like your fun as well as anyone.

It will be interesting to observe in particular the use of "Oh" in those citations. Each one is pregnant, and no two mean the same. Of that single ejaculation I have discovered twenty-six distinct varieties in Mr. Frost's three books of poems; each would exact from a reader who let himself respond to the subtleties of the piece a particular degree of voice, breath, length, roundness or pitch. All of us have heard each one of them in actual speech. Besides the conditions of mind or emotion more familiar to literature such as apostrophe, alarm and agony, they express indifference, a sudden flash of thought, cajolery, playful coaxing, concession, deprecation, remonstrance, discovery of an unexpected solution, sardonic reflection, disillusionment, scorn, resignation, passionate yearning and tragic protest.

These tones of speech are incomparably more effectual in presenting genuine Yankee conversation than the use of dialect would be. And a further reason why there is such sparing use, in North of Boston and the new book, of barbarous locutions, is that the men and women who live in northern Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire have no uniform set of provincial words and expressions. Nowadays, at any rate, one never meets Hosea Bigelow in the flesh. Therefore this sincere poet has no code of dialect.

Not only the language but the souls of Yankee men and women appear as they are upon Mr. Frost's pages. A mere journalist could from the observations of a few vacation trips fabricate a caricature of a Yankee farmer. But even a genius must have shared their lives to describe living individuals with just so much distinctive Yankee character as the real people of the region possess. Working and bargaining and walking and talking with the people would not alone give Mr. Frost that power, of course. He understands people, first, because he has the sincerity and courage to know himself, second, because he likes people, and, third, because he is a searcher after truths; by reason of those qualifications he can put himself almost completely into the emotional and moral vortices in the hollow of which even simple lives are swirled, and can therefore discern the relationships between overt motions and utterances, and inner desires, fears, thoughts, and purposes. Intense, imaginative sympathy suffuses Mr. Frost's poems of people.

There is a sort of intellectual vision of the conflicts and diverse evolutions of the human soul which does not deserve the name of sympathy; it is astute penetration without participation. Mr. Frost is always tender; he always cares. His participation of the feeling saves from being horrible that masterpiece, Out, Out. The setting of that poem is as real as my father's back yard in the country, yet full of the loveliness that touches a sensitive imagination, sometimes, when he snuffs the air and lifts his eyes in one of the New Hampshire intervals. A youth is on the edge of a

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ghastly accident. Listen to the wistfulness with which the poet presages the catastrophe:

> And nothing happened: day was all but done.
> Call it a day, I wish they might have said
> To please the boy by giving him the half hour
> That a boy counts so much when saved from work.

That word "wish" is charged with tenderness. But the pathos is restrained, for Mr. Frost believes that "a real man must lean back against his feelings." One must salt his sentiment with stoicism if he is to preserve his mental poise. And therefore the poem closes thus:

> and that ended it.
> No more to build on there. And they, since they
> Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.

Passion in Mr. Frost's poems is invariably restrained. Yet one would know from Boy's Will that Mr. Frost had known love in its intensity. And Mountain Interval contains some of the most beautiful expressions that could be found of the deep, assured love of man and wife. I suppose that may be the reason why, each time I read it, In the Home Stretch gives me new pleasure. The reader is bound to feel the mysterious oneness of hearts; it doesn't need to be rhapsodically expressed.

Mountain Interval is first of all sincere, I have said. And that sincerity exercises a modulating influence as well upon Mr. Frost's humor as upon his emotion. Even the fun is intrinsic in a real situation, usually provoked, somehow, by character. It is never exaggerated. The poet doesn't make fun; instead he sees and discloses comic facts. Comic in a sense are certain aspects of sober fact, too. There seems a shade of whimsical humor in The Exposed Nest when he raises that troublesome question whether the effort at helpfulness may not injure. If I am right, the joke, there, is at the heart of things, more nearly "down to China" than most of us ever mine for truth.

However, Mr. Frost is devoid of any delusion that he has delved to the center. He sees what he can and describes much; his poems are so sincere that the impressions of life they give us cannot affect us as false fires. For the rest he has no message of ultimate wisdom. But that is no more a defect in him than is the absence in such poems as The Hill Wife of conclusions that leave the mind tranquil. Mr. Frost has put into a poem the reason why he presents no compact message and why some poems seem "not quite finished."

> "You're searching, Joe,
> For things that don't exist; I mean beginnings.
> Ends and beginnings—there are no such things.
> There are only middles"
> . . . . . .
> "It would take me forever to recite
> All that's not new in where we find ourselves.
> New is a word for fools in town who think
> Style upon style in dress and thought at last
> Must get somewhere."

It is very hard indeed to be as sincere as that. It takes courage, and, perhaps, also, what Mr. Frost assuredly has, faith in God.

He is too affectionate and too sensitive to existing beauty to be a pessimist. The closing lines of a poem that has baffled some intelligent readers show that though he doesn't expect mechanical or intellectual inventions to get us anywhere, yet there is joy to be had. I quote from An Encounter:

> Me? I am not off for anywhere at all.
> Sometimes I wander out of beaten ways
> Half looking for the orchid Calypso.

"Half looking" instead of anxiously searching because beauty evades systematic or over-earnest search.

Not a pessimist; but not an optimist either. He has sad moods.

> It's when I'm weary of considerations,
> And life is too much like a pathless wood
> Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs
> Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
> From a twig's having lashed across it open.
> I'd like to get away from earth awhile.

All sensitive and honest people have felt that way. But Mr. Frost goes on:

> And then come back to it and begin over.
> May no fate wilfully misunderstand me
> And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
> Not to return. Earth's the right place for love:
> I don't know where it's likely to go better.

How good and reassuring to know that a man who faces life so squarely would want to come back to it, and that it is attractive because of love!

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And now I have indicated that because Mr. Frost really believes

> The fact is the sweetest dream that labor knows,

he is sincere—in perceiving, in feeling, in thinking and in expressing. And I hope I have not concealed the fact that because his sincerity is so dauntless, so deep-probing, so exacting and so passionate he is in every sense original.

SIDNEY HAYES COX.

The Indian Village

Village Government in British India, by John Matthai. Introduction by Sidney Webb. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 4s. 6d. net.

WE have been repeatedly assured that the war is chiefly developing in Europe a new political conscience, and that the causes for war in Europe began with, and must end in, the Balkans. At least it is certain that la haute politique must increasingly take stock of the economies of the "little peoples" of the East swamped by imperialism, and of the small peasant nations of the West reduced to serving as pawns in the game. Whatever the adventitious mould their intense nationalism may be cast in by the Powers, yet a better knowledge of native institutions, indigenous ambitions and prejudices will be of aid as an index to their final destiny in any future political alignments. In India, the world has always been favored with a social and political laboratory: as Hindu Pathan, Mughal, Maratha and British followed each other, the invaders have respectively met a domestic economy and government which they were forced to adopt into their own administrations. In his interesting and timely study Mr. Matthai has traced the survivals of this indigenous, extra-legal government in British India, and such a study is welcome when we realize that increasing British legislation inevitably tends to obliterate its picturesque efficacy after centuries of use. It is a pity, however, that Mr. Matthai confines his study to British India: more authentic survivals, dating back to the Dravidian prototype, must still flourish in the feudatory native states of India.

The village community of India is essentially a native and historic India. Its *panchayat,* or village council, the only surviving political institution, is still a power, in those rural districts where the archaic functions of village life obtain. From immemorial times the *panchayat,* or body of five, derived from the sacred number *panch,* has been supreme in the local government of a country whose life and pursuits are overwhelmingly agricultural. Metcalfe remarked: "Village communities seem to last when nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty changes; revolution succeeds revolution . . . but the village community remains the same." Needless to say, the *panchayat* has almost lost its original numerical connotation; and Mr. Matthai refers to it in its modern guise of "an association of people for doing administrative or judicial work." As regards its power, Sir Henry Maine, in his famous study of village communities of East and West, remarked that in cases of disobedience to the *panchayat* verdict the sole punishment must have been universal disapprobation, and Mr. Matthai offers evidence that, in this event, the king intervened to impose punishment. A wise administrator like Elphinstone noted its authority and value in western India. "Our principal instrument," he advised in 1821, "must continue to be the *panchayat,* and that must continue to be exempt from all new forms, interference and regulation on our part."

Under modern British administration there is abundant evidence of the aid rendered to district officers by the local *panchayats* from which we may infer that it has not lost all its ancient efficiency. The reviewer was once present at a *panchayat* court held to decide a controversy over water rights. Seven or eight elders of the village convened under a shady banyan, the rest of the village gathered in a circle, unconsciously grouping with either litigant. Evidence was offered, witnesses produced, the memories of greybeards furnishing the most conclusive data, and, after a great deal of free discussion in which the judges took a part, a decision was rendered without any need of a private conference among the judges on the relative merits of the case. Some of the chief qualifications for membership on the *panchayat,* Mr. Matthai has summarized as follows: That the person must own about five acres of tax-paying land, and live in a house built on his own site. Besides the usual religious virtues, he must be conversant with business, must be below 70 and above 35 years of age, and must not have served on any committee for three previous years. Of course there is a good deal of confusion to-day over the functions of a *panchayat* in areas where creeds and races are contiguous. Its modern function is generally thought to be limited to matters of caste. But Mr. Matthai has offered evidence enough to show that no caste distinctions operated in the past, and authorities like Carstairs in Bengal, and many other official observers, have only had the opportunity of contact with mixed communities of Hindus and Musalmans, where the caste *panchayats,* owing to the British policy of neutrality in religious differences, must indeed be courts of last appeal.

But the reader must turn to Mr. Matthai's study for information on the various activities of the true *panchayat,* and of the various ways it is still utilized by the British. Some of the activities in the past, where the court was powerful, were those pertaining to education, poor relief and certainly incidental famines, sanitation, watch and ward, and public works. In spite of the disabilities under which women have lived since post-Vedic times, Mr. Matthai quotes a recent official report from Madras containing epigraphic references "here and there to women members on village committees, and apparently women were under no absolute prohibition."

W. G. T-F.

Thinking at Seventy-Six

The New Reservation of Time, by William Jewett Tucker. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. $1.50.

AN active college president, suddenly retired through the mere fact of his reaching a certain age, sits down to explain to himself what values can be squeezed out of this whim of society that it accounts itself better off without the service of elderly men than with it. The new reservation of time represents his naïve discovery of a leisure for unspent energies. Against a world that would ignorantly scrap him Dr. Tucker's sense of injustice works out a philosophy of defense. And these essays, the fruit of that leisure, reveal the power of a mind which, hitherto closely disciplined to an orthodox institutional life, is suddenly left free to express its own criticism.

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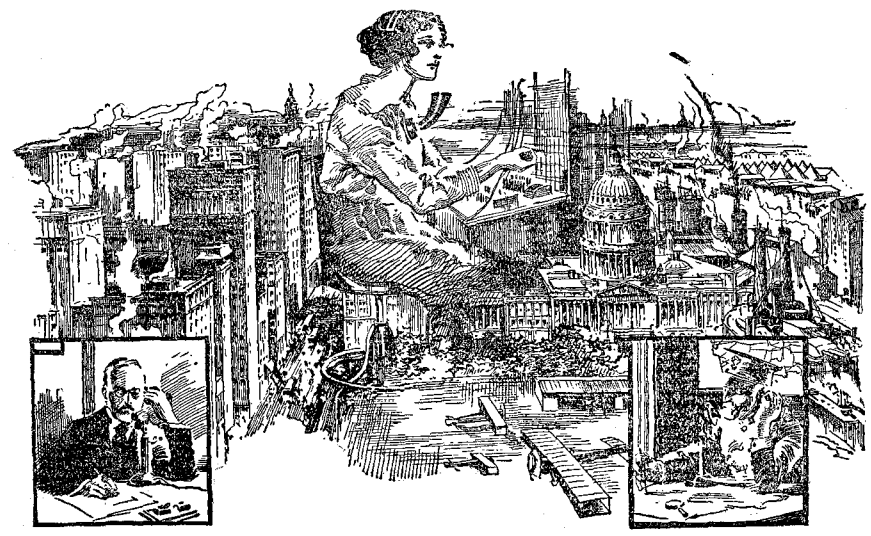

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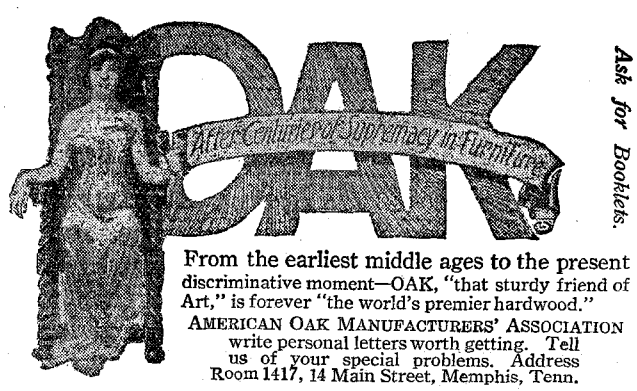

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is that to be institutionally responsible is to be intellectually suppressed and benumbed. Dr. Tucker does not say this, but he gives the effect of a mind that has been a long time in prison, the implications of his philosophy are so radical and yet his thoughts move so stiffly in their harness. In the field of Undergraduate Scholarship he is so benumbed by his long confinement within academic walls that he does not even know of the educational issues about which the outside world is becoming restive. But the other essays on current democratic ideals, the social conscience, the peace problem, reveal, through the old-fashioned dignity of style, a vigorous and expanding interpretation that one must listen to. Here is a mind that has a driving radical force about it in any direction where it works openly and freely. Once discount the prison chill and you find Dr. Tucker anything but a class-bound conservative. His pages, if brooded over by the ruling class with which one should have to identify him, would revolutionize our social order. He understands, for instance, the meaning of class-consciousness. He interprets current unrest in this country as a struggle for equality, as against the struggle for unity of a generation ago. He sees the political conceptions based on rights giving way to economic conceptions based on values. Our thoughtlessly denounced materialism he understands to be a necessary move in the war for equality. The activity of organized labor he supports as a similar continued and progressive assertion of the spirit of equality. He accepts the class-struggle, and does not look for political methods to solve the issues between labor and capital. To the ruling class he points out the swing of ideals from charity to justice. He shows how the gospel of the millionaire is being superseded by one of communal responsibility.

In his essays on The Ethical Challenge of War and The Crux of the Peace Problem, Dr. Tucker brings out the essential arduousness of peace. I know no more searching study of the unsatisfactoriness of the kind of peace that is usually preached to us, and of the fallacy that international justice can come without class-justice. The last essay, The Control of Modern Civilization, has a distinctly religious flavor. But this proves to be far less a touch of the old Adam than a plea for social mastery, and a "faith" that is a veritable "yea-saying," a demand to realize what we see to-day is possible. "The distinction," he says, "of living under a civilization of power is heightened by acceptance of the responsibility involved." Dr. Tucker's thought is impregnated with a social Nietzscheanism that is as invigorating as it is rare. The marvel is to find in this thinker of seventy-six the dynamic philosophy which is only just beginning to be felt by young men of twenty-four.

What do we do in this country with minds like this, pregnant, radical, profound? Is it not a criminal waste of intellectuality to deny freedom to such minds except at the price of superannuation? Dr. Tucker has all the invaluable resources of the publicist. He is the stuff out of which England makes its Morleys and its Bryces. His style, though weighty, is distinctive, and could easily have been made as porous as Professor Dewey's. But our civilization could apparently find no other way of using such a mind than to put it for the best years of its life into the routine of a New England college, where the horrifying prestige of the higher education kept it in a state of torpor. Somehow at Dartmouth Dr. Tucker did not get himself tapped as a public philosopher. It is not until he is retired that he shows us in these essays what he might have been doing all these years as a publicist free lance. President Eliot has gone through a similar "second blooming," but his thought has not half the realistic vigor of this book.

If President Tucker could not have had an earlier release, we are at least grateful for him now. May the years spare him an ever newer reservation of time!

R. B.

Shakespeare, Emerson and Oliver Swett Marden

Laugh and Live, by Douglas Fairbanks. New York: Britten Publishing Co. $1.00.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, twin-brother to Pollyanna, here exhorts you, in one hundred and ninety pages and twenty smiling illustrations, to believe profoundly in yourself and the goodness of the world, to be happy and successful—to laugh and live. He chatters amiably and discursively of success, happiness, laughter, education, marriage, "the advantages of an early start," personality, initiative, extravagance, and "self education by good reading." To the last named he devotes an illuminating chapter. Without stint Mr. Fairbanks recommends Shakespeare. The whole of page 158 he devotes to quoting in full Polonius's advice to Laertes. "Like the philosopher Emerson, he [Shakespeare] boiled down the world's thoughts into terse sentences and one goes into a new universe when reading any of his plays." To Mr. Fairbanks Shakespeare is an unceasing source of inspiration. "In choosing our books one must bear in mind one thing—let them be inspiring. . . . Books by such men as Marden and Hubbard are great generators of the electricity of doing things. They have put into words those innermost emotions which are the instruments of success. . . . With Shakespeare, Emerson, Scott, Cooper, Marden and Hubbard one would have quite a representative library for a start." And at the very end of the chapter, as an afterthought: "the Bible causes us to think!—and no library is complete without it."

Mr. Fairbanks talks his honest heart out in this book. He takes you into his confidence, talks to you as man to man, quite like Billy Sunday chatting with God. And it is not only as the successful American making half a million a year that he speaks; it is also as the thinker, the cultivated dilettante. "I read good books," he says, "in order to exercise my mind." One conceives Mr. Fairbanks exercising his mind quite as he exercises his agile legs with a skipping-rope! Mr. George Creel, in a "close-up" at the end of the book, assures us that "there is more to Fairbanks than his grin" and that "his mind is as strong and vigorous as his body." This assurance is supererogatory. Of his intellectual virility Mr. Fairbanks had already given sufficient intimation. He adores Roosevelt, Joan of Arc and Beethoven. "A certain odor shot out into the auditorium will produce the same effect as sad music, such as Beethoven used to play."

The Fairbanks complacency, immeasurable as it is, is not ungenial. He wants everyone to succeed, to do things, big things. Success is his God, a sleek, smiling fetish. He voices and radiates the desire of America. "He is," says Mr. Creel pathetically, "what every American might be, ought to be and frequently is not." Certainly he is what every American wants to be. Self-satisfied, immensely careless beyond personal gratifications, blindly optimistic, convinced utterly that poverty and crime, disease and unhappiness come by ordination to those predestined pariahs

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from the warm enclosures where gambol the competent, the rich, the sane, the successful, his is the quintessential creed of a society that perhaps nothing short of war and calamity can galvanize into a realization of the swollen hollowness of its egotism.

Contributors

to this issue

H. N. BRAILSFORD is an English publicist and is the author of several books on international affairs.

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SIDNEY HAYES COX is a graduate of Columbia University and is now in the army.

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Q. Why is this?

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Q. Then why are not all golf balls hard?

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